Some More Philosophy of the Hermetics

Gift of
Mrs. N.H. Nesbitt

THIS BOOK
BELONGS TO
N. HILL NESBITT

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Hatch, David P.

SOME MORE PHILOSOPHY

OF THE

HERMETICS

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR AS

SOME PHILOSOPHY OF THE HERMETICS.

Thus we speak; interpret you who can.

1898

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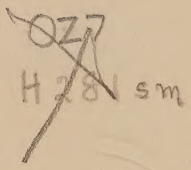

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PREFACE.

It is possible that some of you have wondered about our symbol, the sealed packet or letter, and it is quite proper that we make ourselves clear in regard to it, so that your normal curiosity may be satisfied. Hermeticism is very old, older than written history, in fact, as old as man. The society goes back before chronology, and its beginning is lost in the fog of the ages. History can tell but little of it, because it *is* Hermeticism. In Masonry, in the *higher degrees*, it is well understood, but Masons are close mouthed.

Hermeticism is the result of two things; first the constitution of man himself, and second, the state of society in which he lives. Man is a life preserving animal; as he grows wiser, by life he means his soul, his affections, his intellectual conceptions, and his subtler instincts. In order to keep these intact, he found that a certain amount of prudence was necessary; that the very gloss

and sheen of his soul's purity necessitated a sacred, secret, internal monastery with locks and bolts and bars, drawn only when one akin to himself demanded entrance. So then from man's very constitution, as a preserver of Ideals, he can not "Wear his heart on his sleeve," nor uncover his palpitating brain. Second, from the point of society, no two are alike; each bows to a different god, and he who enshrines Baal is more likely than not to persecute, if he have the opportunity, the worshipper of Jehovah. To be able then to live in peace with one's philosophy, a mask is worn, easily unveiled by kindred souls, but untranslatable by those of a different creed.

About the symbol, we would say that the nature of things being as it is, from the fact that philosophies and religions have wrangled through all time and are fighting still, on account of the ghastly trophies of centuries in the form of mutilated bodies and ashes of the tortured dead, the symbol is a necessity. It is nothing other than a secret cypher, in order that people of the same cult may communicate *undisturbed.* There are

many signs used among Masons and Hermetics; in fact there is a language more or less comprehended by them all. There is nothing uncanny nor ultra about the symbol; rightly used, it is no more pernicious than the English Alphabet. During long ages, when the state meant the church, and the king the priest, men who dared to be "Free Thinkers" were in danger of their lives. If the anathemas and excommunications of the pope had been the sum total of punishment, they might have shouted their convictions from the housetops; but the stake and gibbet were different affairs and effectually shut their mouths. There is a silence, however, more deadly than words—an underhand work that tells on the ages.

The absurdity of the Hermetic of the Middle Centuries would be laughable were it not so pathetic. When he speaks of sulphur and mercury and so forth and so on, his pages in print appear more like the ravings of a lunatic than any thing else. To pass as a harmless crank was his only hope of living at all, once upon a time. "But to-day," you say, "there is no danger, why

keep up this absurd symbolism?" We reply, partly from the association of ideas, which, in a way, has become pleasant to us, for the past is at our backs and its memories are sacred, and partly from the first reason given, which is, that man is by constitution hermetic and tells only so much of his story as the world is willing to receive. A certain symbolism, in guise of parable and illustration, was used by the great Masters of philosophy and religion—Jesus and Guatama, to say nothing of the Masters in Egypt—ere written history began. The symbol condenses, and carries a deal of meaning along with it, that pages can not express.

While there is good in a symbol, there is evil also. We, of all people, are disgusted with the abuse of the symbol, and have shorn ourselves of most of them on that account. All sorts of hidden and malignant meanings may be conveyed from mind to mind by these simple instruments, to say nothing of the vulgarity and debasing suggestion which some of them carry in their apparently *harmless* exteriors. There are two sides to this question as well as to every other, and

we leave you to solve the problem as best you can.

In our first book, "Some Philosophy of the Hermetics," recently published, we stated that our cue is taken from Nature, and our aim is the mastery of self. Our god is that *invincible Law,* which, while we find no word in which to express it, is nevertheless manifested in and through us, at all times. We realize the Unknowable because of the Knowable, and feel that on this master parallel of the seen and the unseen, we must rest content.

In this maze and multiplicity of superficial philosophies, hurried men and women, those who have hardly time to discover truth for themselves, ask in a kind of semi-despair, "Which of all these is right?" A positive philosophy (if philosophy at all) must necessarily be the outcome of a fundamental premise, which is, at least, the basis of a *fair* hypothesis, with data, or self-evidence for its reason. Second, a philosophy must be *consistent* with itself; this is of *vital* importance.

If one but take the trouble to look into

the mass of modern isms, propounded by innumerable teachers going to and fro throughout the land, he will find, in bringing these two tests to bear upon them, that they are failures; not that they have no grain of truth in them, but that as systems of philosophy, proving their right to be by their logical consistency, they are failures—buildings with insecure foundations, top-heavy, minus architectural design; studded with gems perhaps, but the mass so thrown together that all sense of Unity is lost.

To hurl assertions at the world without giving reasons for the same, to deluge humanity with generalities, amounts to nothing unless the data appear in the background, or the assumption is self-evident.

Any amount of astounding assertions is admissible if the proof be forthcoming; any sort of a wilderness is bearable if there be a possible entrance or exit; but to be dropped, blind-folded, into the center of an Indian jungle, unaware of how you arrived there, and desperate as to the means of getting out, is to steer clear of philosophy, and go rampant with Chaos.

THE ABSENCE OF THOUGHT.

Can you approximately empty your mind, not only of imagination and memory, but also of thought? A mental vacuum is impossible while maintaining consciousness, but can you order thought away from your brain as you would drive intruders from the house, at least when you desire to enter "The Silence"?

By "The Silence," I mean that restful place where there are voices which sing lullabys such as a mother hums to her child. Can you throw yourself upon your mother's breast where thought is not, and lying there hear but her music which is full of sweetness and echoes. She will sing to you of her undying passion for the sun, which yet is somewhat colder than in days of her youth. She will croon fairy tales of times when she brought forth gods. She will hum

away of the by-gone, when the moon was nearer and bigger—a lusty infant scarcely weaned. She will croak of age, and complain of cold, and the fickle sun. She strokes you with pity, a puny child of her middle life, and you nestle up to her heart and forget to think. You are all ears and eyes—memory, imagination, logic, have gone. You are negative, receptive, vacant, and your mother seives her dreams through you, in the silence; they rush into you and out as a stream through a culvert. You feel, but this is not passion, there is scarcely a positive element about it; it is revelry void of aim. You are drawing the milk from your mother's breast, with scarce more consciousness than that of a petted child. To be sure, it intoxicates like a mild wine, it calms like a soothing drug. You feel scarcely yet born—Your sense of individuality is stupefied by hers—You are lost almost, on the billows of her bosom, without thought, as I define it, without memory or creative power—a speck on her breast rising and falling with its rythmic heave.

This is "The Silence." But you ask me "Do we take nothing away from it, do we come back to *positive self* again and bring no trophy?" Her dreams did but rush through you, we answer, but you were washed clean, just as the culvert is washed by the hurrying river. No bath in the dews of the morning can purify like this. The subtle drip of her dreams, more misty than silver fog, has whitened your face and brightened your eyes. You come back to your positive self made over, because so much has gone from you. You weigh less, you move with speed, you feel yourself a part of the gases; earth's gravitation has little hold, you are light, you float like a feather on air, you fly like a butterfly. Something has gone; you were stripped by your mother and hugged naked. You discover that your raiment has vanished. Like Eve you are ashamed, and you gather leaves and grasses, and weave a garment, which trails on the ground.

Nature is a great thief—and by nature we mean at this juncture the mother aspect—she is ever struggling to get you back into

herself; if she cannot have you alive, she will take you dead; but be not alarmed, when you *think* you steal from her, and the balance is struck.

The individual thinks, but he who approximately yields, for the time, his individuality, ceases to reason. I am going to tell you later what I mean by thought; just now I desire to impress upon you the necessity of *non*-thought. Man can never rebound to one extreme, unless he can spring to the other. The *positive* thinker must be a non-thinker. The great reasoner contains within himself the possibilities of a fool. The reaction from thought must inevitably be to the region of non-entity.

Do not imagine that the mass of people are either very positive or very negative; they have neither the dynamic, ejective power of the thinker, who sends a fiery messenger from his brain straight to an object, tears out its core and brings it back, nor the abandonment of the baby who fastens itself to its mother.

To suffer yourself to be hypnotized by

nature, is to act on the mimic stage of life the part of the clown, who laughs and shivers and winks as the manager dictates. This is possible only to the mighty thinker, who rises so high with his "Balloon of Thought," that when it collapses in the azure, he falls a dead weight on the bosom of her who watches her chance to enfold him.

If you find that you cannot get rid of yourself, you have not acquired the power to think; you will never shock the world with your originality, nor overturn kingdoms. But if you should discover some time that you are a fool, be of good cheer, the sage will appear next day.

THOUGHT.

Thought as we have said, is dynamic. Just in proportion as you energize intellect, will thought be. You must first have an object upon which to spend your force, and if that power be great, you will take the defenseless thing by storm. To fire your battery of thought at a thing, is to shatter it. You break it to pieces and get at its innermost construction. Thought is first iconoclastic, and afterward cumulative. In its projectile energy it overthrows, in its constructive energy it rebuilds. Analysis precedes synthesis, and the thinker plays with the two as a boy plays with a pack of cards.

When thought is approximately absent, you float on the stream of Nature; when thought is present, you row up tide. The thinker is an individual as against all odds; he throws down his gauntlet to the Universe,

and in his Almightiness tries to define God. He postulates a fundamental premise as solid as the foundation of earth, and erects his tower of Babel in the form of a syllogism, even to the skies. He somehow manages to brace up his individuality and hold his own against an army. He has no vulnerable point, not even a heel, and the arrows of the angels break on him as if he were incased in metal.

A thinker is a positive entity, but uncommon of course. A cat even has logic, but it is hardly a thinker, as we define the term. Men as a rule, reason out their little theories, lay down syllogisms, gather data, and infer, but the thinker does more. The master who plays with thought as a child plays with a pack of cards, has a logic no different from that of a cat or the leader of a town-meeting. Logic is logic in the brain of a titmouse or the cranium of a Cuvier. But a giant in intellect has a Unit of Force that sends his little ball of logic out into space, at something which it hits and penetrates.

The thinker has an eye that sees, and an energy that propels. Right here we would say, that in reality he may be no stronger than another who hits nothing, but the difference is this, the thinker directs and utilizes his power while the other dissipates and wastes.

If you have a horse and hitch him to a plow, you can make a furrow, if he runs at large he will leave but the track of his hoofs.

Thought goes under, around and into a thing—it concentrates. You look about for the thinker—one who holds to a subject until he has mastered it—but where is he? Logic is simple, but thinking is subtle. The thinker, if he appear, whirls logic within logic, syllogism within syllogism. He is a diver who goes to sea bottom. He calculates, he compares, he hypothesizes, and theorizes, he weighs and measures, he reaches, gathers and holds, and finally *he judges.* The thinker juggles with induction and deduction as a showman tosses knives; he hunts for facts as a miser hunts

for gold; he steals from maternal Nature, as she endeavors to steal from him, and comes out more than even every time.

When the non-thinker comes to himself after his resuscitation from drowning in Nature's milk, he says to her after the manner of Christ to his mother, "What have I to do with thee?" The tremendous rebound to egoism from non-entity, makes him inclusive rather than included. He encompasses instead of being incompassed—He is master rather than child—He environs the object with his long arms of subjectivity—He is a self generating force, held to all other Egos by the merest thread—A self illuminating star dispensing light to his little coterie of planets. He is a creator manipulating laws, for lo! he thinks.

This is not what the reasoning animal does. It knows nothing of thinking in its high sense, neither do the herd of men.

The thinker in his might is a giant, staring over the heads of pygmies. His march is one of terror; he crushes crawling, groveling life wherever he treads. He unceremon-

iously peeps under the veil of Isis, and rudely stares the Sphinx in the eyes.

When the thinker goes rampant nations tremble. France shuddered at Rosseau, and England rebelled at Spencer. Christ carried his own cross, as did Galileo and Bruno.

The thinker fights every step of the way with conventional prejudice. He goes in the crowd with his elbows out, and thins the mass with blows from his fists. He is supremely healthy; superstition, morbidness and moodiness, (in its sophomoric sense) are out of consideration.

Thought is a tonic stronger than wine; it has the elixir quality and fires the brain and nerves to a fine frenzy. He who can think or not, who is a fool and Master in one, needs no juice of the grape, nor fume of the weed. He loads himself, fires, hits and brings in his game—sometimes dead, but more often alive.

The result of thought is individualism. The thinker becomes nobody else, but all that he desires becomes him; he includes an object as a lordly husband includes his

wife. His potential personality is far removed from all that he does not reach after, and isolate, he swings round his orbit in heaven, as though no other star were. He is unlike all else, and is styled a genius because he originates. The pressure of his hand is never forgotten—it leaves an impress which is not seen, but felt.

Let us reiterate once more, the power to give up, means the power to take again. If you have a potent individuality bolstered by thought, you can take it off as you would your clothes and retire to sleep and dreams in Nature's arms—naked, thoughtless—to wake, and don *yourself* once more, a tremendous *Ego,* armored and panoplied for war—an individual who spurns his mother's apron strings and starts out for himself—a conquerer taking the citadel of Nature by storm—scaling heaven, weighing stars, spanning space, building worlds. Such the thinker!

In his greed to have, to hold, to know, he wraps his heart in velvet, that the thud of its plaintive beat may escape his ears. He

conceals the tears in his eyes by his cold steely gaze. He frowns on Cupid, and scoffs at the solicitations of Venus. There is an iceberg grandeur about him, that makes the weak shiver, and flowers droop. He calculates with lightning rapidity, and figures to him, mean something different from symbols. His thought turns to action as soon as it is born—and comes forth a double-faced child. He sees the smallest and the greatest aspect of a man or a country, and all that goes between extremes, is swept by his eye.

To think is but one mood of man. Another day, the man of thought may turn lover, but which ever expression is his, the whole being goes out in it.

Remember then, that he who can lose himself can find himself. The thinker means the non-thinker, and thought present, the possibility of thought absent.

SCIENCE.

The man of science seeks data at the risk of his life; he hunts for evidence like a detective, and submits to the world his hypothesis as an officer delivers his prisoner to the judge. Without shame, he acts the spy, and brings his own, or a microscopic eye to bear on the hidden haunts of beast, bird, and insect; he boldly watches the domestic life and scandals of tiny specimens, as a giant might watch ours. He cruelly cuts open the body of the animal while still it lives, and devours the inner workings of its organs with the heartless gaze of an investigator. He enters hospitals and experiments on indigent humanity, and after the death of a long-suffering patient, buys his body for the dissecting table. He forgets himself in his greed for facts. He makes long marches

mid the dangers of the Archipelago and sleeps under the stars by the side of the savage, that he may capture a baboon, or get experience from an orang-outang. He sits up all night with the stars, and exchanges a chill for an eclipse. He ruins his eyes with the microscope and his blood with contagion. He tests medicines on himself, and watches his own symptoms even to the point of death, for the purpose of taking notes. He is after data and he knows how to get them, and once possessing facts sufficient, he is aware how to act. He is emphatically inductive, and stores away his accumulated "stubborn things" until some day he flashes athwart the world's mind the sword-cutting glitter of *a law.*

This is the man of science, who finds the good of the many in the anguish of the few; who sacrifices himself with his victim, that the storehouse of knowledge may be stuffed, and ignorance provided with a bed of ease. He sets electricity ablaze by a spark from his own brain, and sends the thoughtless crowd cross country in vehicles

started by his own Unit of Force. He forgets ambition, fame, money, self; he loses his life in his riddle as the gamester does in his trap. He is as fanatic along his line, as the most ardent disciple of an anthropomobic god, and is as far superior to him as is the truth-seeker to the worshiper of idols.

Through these pioneers of the world's progress, man has advanced. He sucks the apple which the devotee of science climbed after to the topmost bough. He walks around at night by the light of fallen stars, as if no brain fiber had been taxed in knocking them down. He swallows his microbe-killer and rests complacently on his bed of convalescence, as if no martyr had given a life for his.

Humanity is a vampire which grows fat on the blood of sacrifice. Man warms himself by the fire which Prometheus stole, while vultures peck at the flesh of the god.

But why all this veiled eulogy, to what purpose this rhapsody? Take note—If man can acquire facts without, and play with the forked lightning of a principle, why not

within? If the inductive method is good in the search among objects, why not also when the Ego turns about and faces the other way? Is it unscientific to look upon Self *in*teriorly, as well as upon its manifestation *ex*teriorly, and to ramble round after data in the enclosed country, even to the risk of life as one does on foreign soil? Why not watch the inside of the psychic house, as well as out of the windows? Why not accumulate, compare, eliminate, classify, data gathered in the byways and highways of *being,* as well as in the streets and alleys of objective life? Why not bring the microscope to bear on one's self, and the telescope as well for that matter, gazing at the insects and the stars within as accurately as one scans minute life without, or sweeps exterior heaven?

The man of science does but half his work, when he looks externally in one direction. Has he forgot that there is space inside as well as outside—that the perspective along the channels of being is as far-reaching as the prospect from source to mouth of

the river bed? Has he forgot that for Sirius without there is Sirius within, which can be dealt with by the test scale of gravitation, whose weight he can gauge by the mightiness of its pull? Has he forgot the potential nuclei scattered throughout his inner self, as thickly strewn as seeds on the pregnant ground? Has he forgot that evolution is manifesting *in* him, as well as without, and that he is part and parcel of earth's soul as well as of her body?

Man, in his mad desire to stand firm-footed on the North pole, forgets that there is a South; and though he may never plant a perpetual standard on either, it is possible to veer back and forth between both, now approximately toward one, and again toward the other, making scientific explorations in either direction, and gathering data sufficient to fit two halves into a circle of wholeness, which stands for completed truth.

The vice of science thus far has been, to study data from its material manifestations, leaving the immaterial to the clutches of the fakir and priest. The man of science

casts his immortal soul into the cauldron of a syllogism, where an uncanny metaphysician turns it over and rolls it up and down till annihilation were preferable to its last uncertain state. But the day approaches when the cold gaze of science shall turn inward, till the balls of its eyes shall look like those of the dead, beholding things of which no sage has writ—facts which fail of translation, save into action—principals which deny expression save in regeneration—potentialities inactive save in Mastership—divinity unrealized save in the god.

LOVE.

As the sun majestically ascends heaven towards the zenith, I mark the shadows severe and solemn beneath the trees. The passionate sun with its approximately vertical rays, accentuates the blackness where weird shades gather taking grotesque forms as if Imps caught and fixed by a fiat of fate. The dispassionate gloom under the juniper bush is challenged by naught save the passionate glare overhead. The Opposites defy each other, maintaining polarity in spite of increasing intensity—the more vivid the sun the deeper the shade—the pair flaunting contrasts back and forth with increasing power, and foiling one another by the invincibility of law.

Alas Love!—vertical rays of fire piercing by their straight fall through the breast of matter to its very heart. Alas Hate!—black about the roots of manifested life—cool,

scowling, certain. With the soft shimmer of fire on the juniper leaves, the shadows beneath utter the menacing speech of silence, and tell that which the fixed scowl on the brow of man tells when dire Hate shrouds him.

Love! your mantle is many times folded, and white only where the high lights glitter.

What do you do, O man! when the sun's rays descend like a shower of gold on your head—What do you do, O slave of the Pairs! when it tortures your body with fire, even to where your feet press earth—What do you do when the drops ooze from your pores to your brow, or drip from your hands? *You seek the shade*—You crawl under the juniper bush and shiver with cold. You have reveled so long in passionate heat, that now you freeze in clammy sweat, and strive to hug the shadows whose indifferent touch turns fire to ice.

What do you do when Cupid pierces you with arrows, till each wound is a fevered center of love—which like all things inflamed, grows fetid and breeds vermin? You

seek the shadowy halls of Hate, and though you avoid the inner dungeon, you lie in the corridor and suffer Indifference to breathe his north-wind breath upon you till your putrid sores are healed.

An extreme swing of the pendulum calls for another in the opposite direction—the time piece loses its measured beat and fails to point the hour.

We are not speaking here of that soft indolence which calls itself love—which shakes hands with all mankind, pats little children on their heads, and strokes the backs of responsive brutes. We are not referring to the unctious soul who drips sanctity from his finger ends on whatsoever he doth touch. We imply not that mortal who is steeped in the heat of his own blood, till he bloats with a species of self-satisfaction that redounds to the welfare of the world. We have no dealing here with an attenuated altruism, grandly stimulating in its essence as is the oxygen we breathe, but in its very universalism far removed from the mightily selfish, yet God-inspired passion known as love.

Love, in its projectile intensity, sees but one object—It is focused persistently upon a target—It shocks the ether medium between itself and the desired, and hypnotizes its prey by the invincibleness of its will. Love gives no quarter, but slaughters and devours. Love is a bullet of passion aimed straight. Love is a stream confined twixt granite banks, rushing from source to mouth. Love is male, he is Eros—His arrows of light are fresh from the furnace fires, they are new—child of Venus and Hermes; he was bred in a nest of veils, but he tears them to pieces one by one and comes forth winged, hot and naked to be clipped and cooled by the shears and breath of Hate.

The comet drawn by the fascinating subtlety of the sun, rushes across heaven straight to the fiery core—It makes of itself an arrow sped by its own explosion—and the sun strives to gather it in, as the fisherman hauls in his fish, but terrific as is the attraction, if the comet is a true entity, if within it glow the fires of regenerative individuality, sharp and sure is its sweep about,

when the eternal mate of attraction asserts itself once more.

The law of Reaction speaks from the Sinai of man's being, and roars in his ears its everlasting decree.

Love, projectile—Love, selfish—Love, magnificent, transformed to Hate, traverses the trackless waste of heaven as does the exiled demon upon whose ears the gates of paradise have clanged. And you, with your puerile instinct and childish prattle, enquire, "Is this right and just—If *good* must foster *bad*, why live?" Be dumb, sad mortal, a moment, close your lips and look. What head is that, what form—severe as is the jagged peak towering twixt the flower-strewn vale and the land of death? *Stern Necessity!* holding Cupid by one hand, and by the other, Hate. Stern Necessity! clothed in the many colored veil which flashes like a peacock's plumes—as is earth's genius clothed in all the Nation's flags. No pity has she, and no fear. She jerks the chain of flowers that fastens winged Love to her belt

—She pulls hard at the gyves that bind her fast to Hate, and owns them both.

Impartial as is Justice, when Cupid flies, Hate's chain is cut.

Necessity conceived and brought forth two—a pair of twins, one black, one white—and Justice weighing, found the balance struck.

Love! Is there no middle course, you ask, some soft, dim, shadowy place where light and darkness blend—where zephyrs, cool and warm, may follow each other, as do silver doves—where moons fall softly on the breast of summer seas and dream their misty dreams—where neutral tints and semi-tones charm sense to happy rest—where soft, half satisfied desire enchants the nerves to revelry in their own throbs—where life, in sensuous ecstacy, knows all the languor of soft youth, ere fateful passion claims its own? Such course there is—and Love oft times is napping there. If you but keep the boy asleep, but drug him with the scent of flowers, 'tis well. But should he wake—Away with dream! The awful problem! now!!

What of a love like that of Christ—the love of object, country, race—that drives its slaves to torment and to death? A calm retort. *It is the same*—passion seven times hotter than before—passion that outvies all fires that man can build—passion that bids poets write their sonnets in the blood of their beloved—passion that lights the dungeon with the eyes of those adored—passion that captures countries and subdues their tribes—passion that lays claim to the unborn, and dominates the future by its grasp upon today. Passion that hurls scorn like hard rocks at the Gentile, and rains tears upon the Jew.

Whate'er you *love*, be it country, object, angel or a god, your tongue of irony is loosed, and bitter words drop from the place where honeyed measures fell.

The Master's poise lies not in *feeling* but in *knowing*—He feels as a god feels—to the dregs of his heart—He knows as a god knows—to the limit of intellect—And looking Necessity full in the eyes, he cuts the flower chain of Cupid, and liberates Hate.

WOMAN.

As it required but one rib of Adam to make Eve, and as she is completely equipped with this portion of a skeleton herself, while she is ever a part of him, she is essentially not *all* of him; in fact she has a potent individuality that never can be his. The myth of the Bible is pregnant with meaning, and might be interpreted in its completest sense by a *practical* Hermetic; but in this essay we propose neither to inspect its subtleties, nor lay bare the shining tables of the Law. We cover the face of Moses and come down to earth's level to behold humanity as it sees itself.

In the crowd we find woman; she is everywhere as common as man. She not only looks out through the lattice of the casement, but she traverses the street and barters in the

market. The bolts slip back as if moved by unseen hands when her knock is heard on the door. Unveiled she sits amid men in the counsel chamber and the church. She points her own telescope at the sky and searches for stars, as her timid sister hunts for flowers, and dares to look man straight in the eyes without dropping her fringed lids. She is possessed of a sort of bold modesty, the like of which was never seen on earth before. There is defiance in the straight carriage of her form and the poise of her head which is not wanting in sweetness, though it teems with half expressed power. The shape of her brow is changed, and Praxiteles, were he alive today, would need more breadth of marble where the hair kisses the skin, than he used in the balmy days of Greece. Her brain is heavier and more infolded, than was that of Diana, boxed into a twenty inch skull. She has kept pace with herself however, for her chin is firmer, and her eyes speak meanings not read in those of Dido; there is a challenge in their depths which has recently come; it has the

sphinx quality. And man who has changed but little since the days of Herodotus, save through the evolution of his mother, seeks to read the riddle; he is puzzled, enchanted. The Oriental scoffs and sneers and *looks again.* The Occidental feels a sweetness about his heart *that is new—and gazes on.*

Behold the master parallel—man and woman—the pair bound eternally by the rib of Adam, in their polarity challenging each other, and smiling in an ecstacy of defiance, feeling in their extreme of consciousness the sweetness and indissolubility of the bond. Woman has slept through the ages till now, with an infant on her breast and an embryo in her womb; save here and there one, or a few, who woke to shock earth from its foundations with the potency of an ultra individuality.

The woman in woman has lived sleepless from all time; but the man in her—the positive—naps off and on, as if drugged by sex narcotics.

Evolution is slower than the mills of the gods, but in spite of this the individual

buried in the brain of woman, at last looks out from the windows of her eyes—it is sleepy still—and wonders as its glance sweeps the spaces, whether there will be rain or shine; it wonders if it dare venture forth; it blinks and blinks and turns this way and that, uncertain; it feels as the bud feels on the first opening—afraid of space and the sun. It fears knowledge and learning and experience; it dreads the elbows of man and his tongue; it fears the elements and the battle—yet when it looks over its shoulder on the nest where it has slept and dreamed for centuries, it finds it foul—unclean. For the first time it is sufficiently awake to sense the odor of decay and age.

The individual is turning, in woman, backward and forward, undecided. It lies down to get up, and gets up to lie down; it is restless. It has no fixed gaze, like that of man. Its power of concentration is weak. But mark you the sea, when its tide starts upward, no mandate of a king can stop it. It rises to its limit of possi-

bility in spite of all the effort that the Demon of Earth's gravitation may make. Should man wipe woman off the face of earth, he needs must vanish with her—and nothing short of that can stop her apparent evolution, nor turn back the wheels of time. Fools dam the ocean—and hide the flaming torch of modern woman under a bushel—but the ocean rises in spite of this and the bushel *burns*. Man forgets the indestructible rib, and in his ignorance is unaware that in shackling woman with chains of gold, he weights himself with lead.

Woman has been a liar through the ages, and why? Because half asleep, she feared for her dreams and her husband—brother Osiris. There was but one individual and that was *He*. In the Orient still, in softly shaded rooms, under veils, she suffers man to weight her with gems till her limbs are so heavy that she is powerless to raise them in her own defense, and there she continues to lie—matching his honest force by a subtle and ever shifting intrigue. By reason of her sleepiness and her overtaxed func-

tions, man has instituted the harem, where his positive entity has found in the many, what he missed unconsciously in a single Ego.

Now and then one—a veritable Cleopatra has flashed like a comet across skies to show that such could be. One Sapho sang notes that live yet, and drown in their echoes the voices of the male nightingales of modern song. One Aspasia was a *casus belli,* that changed the international relations of Greece; and one woman of the moderns altered the Astronomical map. But a star, isolate, is ever bright—the search-light of comparison shines elsewhere—and without a foil it glitters on.'

What of it? What does it mean?—this claim to individuality by woman—this self assertiveness—this force? Will Cupid perish neath the heel of her masculine foot, and man suffer by her accession of strength? Perhaps, till the woman awakes in him. Of one thing be sure, the mythical rib—or that for which it stands as a perpetual symbol—can never be severed; the indis-

soluble bond is as fixed as the fiat of law. And whether man sleeps and woman wakes, or woman sleeps and man wakes, or both look with a challenging smile of full consciousness—eye to eye—one can never escape the other. The moving equilibrium will be struck somehow, somewhere, between the negative and positive. The Pairs are faithful, and an equator is as certain as are the north and south poles.

But today, what of today—the positive now? We answer, it foreshadows *tomorrow*. Today is the dawn which conceives and gives birth to noon—and who shall predict the splendors of noon?

When woman reaches full consciousness O man! tremble at your joy. When the girdle of Venus is taken from her hips and twined about her brow, O man! beware of too much happiness. In the old time, Aphrodite stole in to sup with thee, and afterward to twine herself about thee as the ivy hugs the oak. But tomorrow from early dawn to dusk, she will gleam here and everywhere, defying light with the flash of

her individuality—on ship deck, in the mart of trade, mid books, touching all things with herself, till the world burns and your own eyes smart.

Will it be better or worse? For whom, we ask—for thee? 'Tis out of order. Her turn has come. She also shall know life—She also shall read the future in the flash of *different* gems—She also shall draw at the flasks of varied wines—She also shall enter the ice chambers of intellect, and grow warm at the furnace of divine passion—She also shall give and take. Justice never yet through eternity has blushed; her scale reaches out of sight, and her arm from socket to finger tip, is too long for the measurement of mortal eyes.

The sun of the Orient descends to rise over the Occident, and departs from the west to flood the east—The equator runs true to the poles—And the doves of night brood o'er the land, when the sea-gull rises to greet the day.

THE MARTYRS.

Many ardent disciples of every cult instinctively seek martyrdom. This comes not necessarily from a love of Truth as they understand it, but from a desire to prove their righteousness by their very suffering, and also from a vanity inherent in themselves. The uniqueness and sacredness of martyrdom tickles their fancy and makes them anxious to pose as saviors and semi-saviors of mankind. In the martyr you can usually discover an obstinacy and intolerance that would be unendurable to the world outside were it not for the reality of his suffering. To be sure he believes himself right. This is the first proposition and not to be disputed. In this he is honest; as honest as God. Braced by his backbone of conviction, he stands erect and prides himself upon his straightness, as though there

were not another reliable soul on earth. He glories about that of which the *vast majority* says nothing, and instantly becomes a martyr; for the crowd will tolerate no assumption of superiority for that which to the ordinary mind is as common as love, so they proceed to persecute. This is the rule. There are exceptions. The commonplace martyr poses because he dares to believe something or somewhat, and gets a blow or a brand, whereupon he strikes a new attitude and poses again. At last he is tortured to death and goes down in history as a saint; for after a man's capacity for posing has reached its climax, his sufferings loom up, and the world reacts and kneels.

This passion for martyrdom develops in the very young, who are especially given to sensitiveness and self pity and "misunderstoodness." They imagine that their mental liberty is continually threatened, and not altogether without cause considering the dogmatism of the average parent. But this desire to be set apart, and to become sacred grows rapidly in the young heart, where the

owner of it is converted by something, no matter what. He glares at the world like a mother tigress protecting her young and imagines that his position and stand are of more importance than that of a reasoning archangel. This ultra aspect excites comment and sneers from an otherwise uninterested crowd. In fact they laugh and proceed to pelt him with stones. This is what he most ardently desires; a new dignity envelopes him, a "far off" look comes into his eyes, he casts them upward and folds his hands, and the crowd laughs louder and throws more stones. There is something supremely ridiculous and sad in the whole condition; each is injured, the crowd and the martyr; the people first, because of the assumption on the part of one of them that he is prohibited, when he really is not. This very assumption is an outrage on the crowd's idea of fair play, and they proceed to bring him to sense in virile fashion. The moment the first stone is thrown the position shifts, and the outrage apparently is upon the martyr, though really a balance is

struck. But later the passion for cruelty keeps pace with the passion for martyrdom, and the more the lone figure poses, the more the crowd rages. Finally heaven opens, the martyr floats away on a gilded cloud and the crowd sits down in sackcloth and ashes.

The vast array of martyrs is thus, but as we have already said there are exceptions. And here comes our great and clinching argument in favor of Hermeticism: "Silence is golden." The Hermetic has some ultra views, but he refrains from thrusting them upon the world, more rapidly than his judgment dictates. He has understood through the ages that were he to tell all he knows he would go out to return as a martyr a thousand times. He knew full well in the middle century, that the glory of the fagot and the gibbet were as much, *possibly more,* his, than that of any avowed pagan or Christian, out of time on earth. He knows to-day that the press, an engine of torture, and the two-edged tongues of men, are only waiting an opportunity to get in their deadly work. He has discovered some things that

he would cut out his tongue rather than mention aloud, because *he avoids martyrdom.* He has no desire whatever to be unique, nor ultra, nor by his position to challenge humanity, as though they knew nothing and he knew all. He has no desire that repentant tears shall be rained upon his sacred grave. When he talks his speech is bold, but there is much that he does not say.

Now having written this against the majority of have-been and would-be martyrs, we come out in defense of those others whose martyrdom is thrust upon them in spite of themselves. Of those few who have *not* been self assertive, nor proselytists nor presumptuous, only in deadly earnest, allowing the same privilege to their fellow men that they demand for themselves. Such there are who are persecuted.

The crowd, as a rule, believes in fair play, and avoids interfering with a sort of half understood liberty which all desire to have. But now and then an individual among them, spoiling for a fight, raises a hue and cry, till the mass, like a flock of sheep, bleat in

unison, and rouse in themselves unholy desires which they proceed as fast as possible to realize; then comes a passion for persecution more catching than smallpox.

When the Hermetic is at bay he is the most desperate fighter on earth; his sword of opinion lies safe in its scabbard, till another draws and thrusts at him, then quick and sure he lunges back, and the glitter of blades is seen from afar.

But it is not the Hermetic martyr who claims our special attention; he is a *rara avis in terra;* but all those who like him cleave their way through the jungle of opinion, straight to the temple of truth. It may be a Gothic cathedral resonant with the chords of mass. It may be a severe Lutheran meeting house, or a Mohammedan mosque. It may be the Hall of Science, or the Minster of Nature. He starts for an open door; he determines to go under though heaven rains stones; he neither crowds nor jostles, he demands but walking room, his share, that is all. He molests no one and brooks no interference.

But there are some in the world who cannot endure this poise, this justice; there are tyrants, intolerants, dictators, who are galled beyond measure by such an exhibit in a brother man. They hate with a cold steel hate, and if they fail to thrust him through with a sword, they prick him with pins. He suffers a blow on the right cheek, then on the left till the limit is reached. If the power lie in him he clinches his foes; if not, he suffers martyrdom. This is an unsought honor; it is thrust on him, and from it he extracts a sweet, as might a bee from bitter herbs. He is no coward who goes with a hung down head to the stake. He walks erect with an air of conviction which is far removed from arrogance, and turns neither to the right nor left to feel the public pulse. He neither rolls up his eyes nor clasps his hands, nor is there a halo about his head. His glance speaks power, and his tread firmness—while around his lips are lines of pain. He thrills with no fictitious ecstacy, whose reaction is as deadly

as that of opium, he simply endures as a brave man at bay is forced to do.

The philosopher tinctured with stoic grit, has no call to pose or wonder. He has braced himself for resistance, and makes a rampart in his own defense. The crowd is galled, it never forgives him, and he is dubbed by history a Balsamo, or a crank. But what cares he, it is not their opinion he seeks, but *liberty.*

The petty persecutions practiced by the arrogant and intolerant to-day, are a hundred times more unendurable than were the tortures of the middle ages. Under the guise of roses they manifest in thorns, under the guise of kisses they tell in poisoned breath. Sarcasm clothes itself in honeyed words, and sugar plums are quoted bitter pills.

There is a great deal of writing between the lines which one with half an eye can read. There are love-thrusts which cut, and apparent mistakes concealing an element of cruel intent. "God bless you," means now and then "God curse you," "I love you,"

"I hate you." To answer back in these small phrases is to stoop and grovel, so you "grin and bear," but it is ceaseless, endless persecution.

There are silent martyrs everywhere, who dash away rebellious tears and go bravely on while pathetically twisting sad lips to smiles; who answer half hid jeers with pleasant tones; who neither bend nor crawl, but welcome suffering rather than disgrace.

History is hoary with half told stories, and we make history every day.

There is no need to seek martyrdom, to pose. If you are strictly true to self, you are bound to bring up against it at every turn in the road. The problem is how to manage and deal with it. If you are going somewhere you cannot turn back; if the enemy is too strong for you, you must suffer, suffer, suffer.

Pathos is the sombre mate of ecstacy; and athwart the shadow the sun makes its way!

HABIT.

When you glance at the subject of this essay you will be inclined to skip it for the very title suggests monotony, uniformity, and all those conditions and states of being which make life lifeless. At this we do not wonder, for Habit is a tyrant that puts man into a refrigerator at stated intervals and freezes his ever shifting liquid of being into ice. Before he has time to melt after the imprisonment, the hour arrives for a second incarceration. So he is to all intents and purposes, continually congealed, and has comparatively little possibility of variety in his existence.

Life is only life as it is various and many-tinted. Color, form, shifting point of view and vantage, chance for combination, creation, all these imply life. To be crystallized, set, fixed, is to be half dead—a sort

of vivified mummy, leathery and dry—yet able to move automatically and look one way. This is a travesty on life in its full, gushing, fountain-spring sense.

Every day, every-where, we meet these walking creatures of habit, who go over the same road at exactly the same time, whose watches are regulated by standard clocks, and who never vary a second in punctuality. These people are always seeking to *repeat* experiences which in fact never *can be* repeated, and being complete failures as to living, they are amazed that so much *goodness*, sometimes called *promptness,* turns out as badly as it does. These "creatures of habit" wake on time, dress on time, eat on time; they open the same door at the same moment, and pass out into the street at a certain altitude of the sun. Yet there is a difference, yesterday was not like to-day, and they puzzle over this *minimum* of change. In spite of themselves there *is* variety, though scarcely appreciable. The leaven has saved them to a faint glow of life, and gently fermented mummies that they

are, their muscles move. Even a clock gets out of order and refuses to pursue forever the even tenor of its way. The time comes when chaos upsets cosmos, and a new thing is wrenched from the jaws of habit.

The tendency to become fixed, to settle, is in all things; but the counterpart and opposite tendency is there also, and asserts at times in spite of all individual effort to the contrary.

This prelude is only a roundabout way of telling you that a habit of any kind, good or bad, *per se* is to be fought against. All your fighting will only modify the demon of crystallization, making him a little less hard and icy; he is bound to be, and man is ever in danger of losing his true life and individuality from this very fact. When the Devil has argued a man into a habit, he has one hand on him and contentedly bides his time to clutch him with the other. He knows very well the power of reiteration, and how easily man is hypnotized into automatism until he becomes as much a slave of habit, as is the unfortunate subject to the King-

Charlatan of hypnotists. What shall we do then? Are we to be as irregular and disorderly as a street gamin? Are we to have the habit of no habits which is the greatest habit of all? Let me tell you that there is such a thing as that of being regularly irregular, or approximately regular. You have heard of that orderly disorder, which the artist knows all about; you have heard of that Japanese exquisiteness which continuously varies its own neatness and system, until you have a systematic non-system, a paradox that manifests in odd numbers, one-sidedness—art—through which runs the strictest unity of aim.

You have listened to sonatas and rhapsodies of the masters in music, and have noticed in them a something akin to the sounds of nature—the theme so lost in variety that you drop it to pick it up again, long after you have forgotten that it is. You have realized that nature herself manages to reveal unity in variety, when she moulds the two sides of every human face differently, and no two faces exactly the same—

yet the human runs through the human in spite of it, so that a man is never mistaken for a cow, when the sun shines.

But man! we pity him!—He tries to brace himself with the whalebone and starch of habit till he scarcely can move, when he might without difficulty change all this, and with no sacrifice of an approximate uniformity. If he is obliged to go north every day, let him now and then cross the street or walk on the edge of the pavement, just for variety's sake! He is bound to reach his destination if he follows the compass, and by this zigzag deviation of an occasional crossing, something new is liable to give him a thrill. Perhaps there are different trees over there, or different strata in the stone, you may meet a beautiful face, a habitue of that side! The houses perhaps are not so uniform and are of a different architecture, or if you get out of the beaten path a *few* inches, a bit of Flora, just a smile of her, may catch your gaze, and bring a pleasure to the optic.

It takes but a little thing to turn the course

of a running stream. These little changes even so slight, keep the blood circulating somewhat as does a draft of wine. In fact change, a bit of change is the stimulant of life. The man of habit has been told this, and accepting it as dogma, proceeds semi-annually or at stated periods to migrate to a given place, and renews his periodicities there. He has a *habit* of going away; this of course is an improvement on continuous staying, but it has not in it the full gush of life; it is too periodic and seldom.

The being who *lives* is often, to all outward appearances stationary, he may or may not travel to far countries or trot around the globe. His art of tincturing *everything* with variety has become so perfect in him, that an excursion through his own back yard teems with surprises. His consciousness of "The One Thing" enables him to unite each tiny gem of experience to another so different that when day ends, he dangles a chain of brilliants in his hand, that flashes a thousand colors in the light of the setting sun. He is romantic throughout, and

instead of continually spinning fairy tales to himself, he *lives* and *acts* in his own story; may be on his front door step sniffing at a rose one moment, and holding intimate discourse with a butterfly the next. But through it all is a line of directness, for he will go north on time, as surely as Earth rushes toward Hercules, though she spin on her axis and flirt with the Sun.

If you did but know it, you could do everything consciously each time with a difference, and yet apparently in the same way. The shade of variety would be appreciable only to yourself, and even though a cadet on a man-of-war, your officer would have no cause to complain. If you find it impossible in the physical to vary, because of some obligation contracted, in the mental world, at least you are king, and can conjure variety enough, to, in a degree, overcome physical monotony.

The man of habit is sterile, or if he bring forth progeny, you will find them all patterned from the same mould. He may produce giants along certain lines, but they will be as much alike as the faces of the bronze

Buddhas. The man of variety is prolific; his children are the offspring of genius and have the power of fascination, which is the charm of the new.

One word more; would you know the secret of the far-famed elixir of life—perpetual youth? It is versatility—the power to coax and capture the *new*. It is the ever young, which means the ever new.

If you have learned to sense it, habit in the rigid aspect, is conquered. Habit brings age—it hardens the bones till they are as brittle as glass; it withers and wrinkles the skin to old parchment —it blears the eyes and pushes them far back into the head; it turns the hair to dried patches, with the sere crispiness of withered grass; it bends the spine to the shape of the bow, and turns the voice to a metallic rattle. The new is out of sight, and dull monotony travels the beaten path to the cold chambers of the tomb. But should you drink at the fountain of youth, your blood would bound and throb with life. Your eyes ever flashing on new sights,

would shine like those of the young. Your hair would glisten and glow like living grasses; red and white would rival each other in your clear skin, and your step would be springy and quick as that of a boy at play.

Youth is nothing other than the butterfly-chasing power, which enables one to skip across country after a chimera or a bubble, and back again in time to make a journey toward the desired goal.

Have you forgot that the star, Polaris, flashes fiery tints of red, and blue, and yellow, dazzling the eye of the mariner who heads *due north* on the surging sea?

THE FAMED ELIXIR.

"Life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim," Byron sang of the mortal, but we sing of the immortal. Byron spake of man, but we talk of the god.

In the veins of the earth's subjects there runs a liquid called blood, through those of the Olympians gushed a fluid called ichor.

When Solomon founded his temple, at the innermost shrine were whispered secrets, and the never dying echo of the whisper has struck softly on the ear of the incarnate nineteenth century.

Since man caught at life, as its own object —Since the mortal discovered the god— Since the creature realized the inward creator—Since humanity was found drowned in immortality—From the knowledge of the fact that eternity out-distances time, man

has taken the kingdom of the stars with the stormy challenge of his eyes, while his feet sink ankle deep in the excrescence of earth. Man *demands,* and in the very helplessness of his cry there is a ring of authority which calls for a responsive Yea from the heart of Being itself.

Man has outdone the beast in beastliness, whereby Olympic Zeus has discovered in him a rival formidable. Man's potency to vie with the Devil, implies capacity to compete with God.

But the famed Elixir! The dream of dreams!

The Moslem faces Mecca, the Jew Jerusalem; Eldorado is painted on the sunset sky, and the miscalled atheist dips himself in the limpid stream of the Sierra. Hope with her six heads and twelve feet, who sits on the rock of Scylla, is watching still, and the corpses of the shipwrecked float faces upward on the sea.

An endless siege means *victory.* Faith prolonged brings the mountain to Mohammet, and the stars out of space to the

children of earth; aye more, man wrests immortality from the grim grip of mortality and takes the crest of Olympus by storm. The holy Mount is not limited to the twelve originals. With the gods man becomes one, for their food is ambrosia and their drink is elixir.

But why these metaphors and similes, can you not use Anglo-Saxon you ask; can you not lay bare the heart of truth that we may see it beat? We answer yes, and no. He that hath eyes to see will see, but it requires a trained lens. The sailor can distinguish a sail from a patch of cloud, when the landsman is blind. The heart of truth is so subtle and refined, so microscopic in construction, so far-reaching in vibration, so invisible to the eye of sense, so palpable to the eye of mind, so electric, so calm, that he only who responds to its thrill, can read its meaning. We might tell you in gross words what the elixir is, and you would bandage your eyes in horror, and stop your ears in disgust. We might explain to you the chemistry of being, and you would seek

your closet to pray for our benighted souls. We must touch you with gloved hands for you suspect leprosy; we must use a poet's vocabulary for you fear obscenity; we must come to you steeped in incense for your nostrils scent decay; we must insinuate truth under the guise of a harmless snake—though it in no sense resembles a dove—for you dread inoculation. Should we speak plain words you would translate them into your own soul's language, which grossness we desire to avoid. So we wrap the white nakedness of Truth in veils, the first, the second, the third, lest you mistake a virgin for a harlot.

Have you observed the bounding step of youth, the exuberance of life and the preponderance of motion over rest? Dawn swallows night for its breakfast, and youth makes a light meal of death. But why? Mark you these words; Virginity is insatiate, and life is its pabulum. Virginity is creative, and like Saturn devours its own children. Virginity knows naught of age, but has unconsciously or

consciously, the grasp on, *The One Thing.*" Virginity is never dwarfed by habit, but sees with keen eyes the thing it would capture, though it zigzags in the chase. The virgin bathes herself in the dew and drinks at the fountain spring; she has strange gifts, her sight is clairvoyant, her touch heals the sick. But the virgin who conceives a Christ is pure, not alone in body but in heart. Her thought is on the plane of life; she walks on the mountain ridges, and avoids the valley of death. Thus we speak—interpret you who can.

The soul has wings, but when man clips, Psyche drags her plumes. Wait!! the plumes will grow again. Bury the shears in damp earth and let them rust. Psyche comes with the birds, and bees, and sucks the nipples of the plants; Psyche bathes with Diana in the running brook, and poises on wing near the bosom of earth; she trades love glances with Cupid and kneels at the shrine of Uranian Venus.

The soul is prolific and when it moulds in matter its fingers are dainty.

But the famed elixir! You accuse us of evading. Let us reiterate a few *plain* words: Be assured that as certainly as *you have the potentiality of the devil in you, you also have the capacity of the god.*

The pairs are but two poles of being, and when Lucifer left heaven he *fell far.* Descent implies a height to scale, but where is the ladder of Jacob which the angels walk up and down? Take a lesson from the spider; her resource *is in herself.* From her innermost recesses of being she finds *substance,* for prolongation of her life through the building of snares; she spins the fairy web, which bleaches in the sun to a thing of art. She bridges space with exudation of herself and swings back and forth in the air on the materialized essence of her own being. Do you take the hint? Can you not build the fairy house of self out of self's exuberance? To *conserve* and *transform* the life essence of a soul, virgin in intent, is to store the famed elixir in the holy of holies, where only the poet-priest may enter.

The fruits of a virgin soil are beyond compare. Have you ever dreamed of Eden, where flowers were rank, and earth teemed with life; where to wish was to be, and to will was to do? Have you heard of a paradise where the air swarmed with houris, and the sea with nymphs; of Eldorado whose voluptuous luxury knew no profanation of plow or harrow, but whose spontaneous verdure was but the natural outcome of a conserved and transformed energy? Have you read of men who revivified others with their touch; men whom time passed over, and who gave up life with the glow of youth still on their cheeks after centuries of living? Or have you reversely, in the shadow of a shaft which rose in cold scorn at the head of a tomb, shivered and dreamed of the sterile soil where Adam and Eve wandered after the gates were guarded by the angel with the flaming sword? Have you thought of an Inferno pictured by a Dante, who dipped his pen in blood? Have you conjured a death valley which spread its skeletons at the very foot of a Sierra, whose

fern covered niches were watered by perpetual springs?

Ah! the shaft which marks a mortal's grave cuts the sun in twain, and draws a band of black across earth's bosom, that outlasts the mourner's crepe.

Remember in *self,* are seeds of *life* and *death;* the crop will prove the planting.

Would you have perfumed flowers on the tree of life, rather than a fruit that another eats, cut off the opening buds; they will grow again, again, again, in their ceaseless effort to fruit; and the air will be redolent with perfume, while the eye of man gloats on beauty, and Psyche eats the pollen and drinks the dew.

WORDS.

When the mind is surcharged, it breaks out in words to that extent that people often talk to themselves. From a low form of life upward, entities speak; conveying to one another a veiled meaning which is but half guessed. Words are exceedingly misleading and yet are the best means known to man, with one exception, for conveying thought. If they are winged messengers, they fly to their destination in a roundabout way, but nevertheless arrive, and are more effective than pantomime.

Beast, bird, and man have always talked; for silence eternal is not possible with a full brain; even the dumb-born make hideous attempts at speech and sound. The dumb undoubtedly have an internal language of symbols by which they

battle with ideas in their minds—some invention of their own by which they give form to things and call up objects through a silent picture-language within. A deaf and dumb man's brain must be a veritable gallery of art; where form, color, action are a thousand times more vivid than to those whose symbols are external sounds. On the stage of the dumb mind, the actors convey ideas in pantomine and gesture; all shades of meaning by color; and tragedy and comedy by emphatic action. Even the deaf and dumb is not altogether so; some faint conception of sound is possible to him through the vibration caused by touch. For, strictly analyzed, the shock upon the tympanum is but another form of touch.

But man speaks, the dumb are few; man makes a brush of his words and paints pictures on the air. Again these messengers sent from himself are bullets which strike another dead. Again drops of honey which fall on responsive tongues call forth sweet speech. Man lifts the people on the

wings of his words till earth slips from under them, and heaven is all; or prostrates the rabble faces downward to the sod, with stinging syllables shot from his tongue.

Words are monotonous, sweet, holy, terrible, sublime. They break and heal tender hearts, undo and erect homes, unmake and make nations, unite and separate continents. But the mischief of words—wherein does it lie? Simply in the fact that they are *inadequate*. As man grows more complex he becomes painfully conscious of this. He perceives finer shades of meaning and thought in himself, and hunts the dictionary through for a medium of expression. Alas! he is shocked when he sees how ugly he is in print; and he looks upon his work as a bastard child. Then he invents and coins; but to no purpose; his readers devour the words dictionary-wise, and the author alone reads between the lines.

Words do not, *can not* keep pace with the evolution and complexity in mind. To go back to the root of a word, is but to dig up the plant and toss it dirt and

all in the face of the scandalized reader. To fall back on pure Saxon, or pure anything, is but to convey ideas by the much-mooted method of *suggestion;* leaving the reader full liberty to guess at the meaning. There is perhaps a charm in this fashion as each reader gets an individual conception, so unlike any other that he practically devours himself, tinctured by the author. If the user of words falls back on simile, and the still more powerful metaphor, he relies in greater degree upon the conjuring potency of his listener than upon that of himself; and more likely than not, the picture he strives to convey, will be painted by the pigment of the receiver's mind, which is likely to translate red into brown and blue into gray.

The user of words is even more hampered than is he who strikes the harp strings, or dabbles in the paint box. He has risen a step on the ladder of method, above the artist and the musician, and in striving to convey abstract ideas attempts a deal more, and must needs fail accordingly.

What then is the hope of the word painter, the preacher and the teacher? How shall the orator set fire to an audience, and the poet to a country? Are his words to fly back at him like boomerangs having accomplished but little.—Are they bad pennies sure to return? The user of words is wise when he fully comprehends their limitations. He weighs and measures them and knows what they are, and are *not*. He deducts a certain per cent. of valuation from them, and expects a result from their output in accordance with the reduction. He takes account of the understandings that receive, as well as of the words that give. He makes allowances for his own language and that of others; he expects rather less than more from words than the impulse that sent them forth would imply. He gets at the standard, generally accepted, everyday meaning of the word, and then he uses it with salt. He never digs in the soil of philosophy for root discoveries when he writes and talks to the people; his time is too precious; he acquires as nearly as

possible the people's language in its correct form and comes down to them instead of undermining them. They stand on words as a foundation of common communication, and the sage surely will not throw up their roots, and topple humanity over. Among savants of course, the case is different; but the writer and the orator sell their wares (or give them) to the crowd.

Words are certainly Hermetic enough at best, they expose and hide, being everywhere exponents of the universal parallelism in all nature. The wise realize this and toss words back and forth accordingly, accepting the impossible as a necessary corollary of the possible; squeezing words for the juices, which can never in spite of it, be sucked dry. The philosopher is well aware that whatever he may choose to write or say will be interpreted by each individual differently; and though he state as accurately as possible, his perceptions and conceptions, though he clothe the children of his imagination in colored fabric of his own dye, he is absolutely certain that

each individual reader or listener will translate with a shade of difference, and that to them, in spite of himself, he speaks in a foreign tongue.

It is indeed hard to be understood by another through the medium of wordless speech, and utterly impossible to be fully comprehended through the medium of expressed symbol or sound.

"What then shall we do with words?" We answer, the best you can, remembering that you may count on conveying a certain understanding of your idea, and though it be faint, it at least will have a flash in it, and perhaps some modicum of heat.

Above all avoid anger and sensitiveness at criticism and misunderstanding. Expect this and it will not trouble you. Look for misinterpretation as you do for enemies; a man is of small account if he finds none. But here we wish to say, and must admit, that in all probability a good deal of your discomfiture arises from your own fault. In the first place if you really wish to convey an idea conscientiously and for a

purpose, it is your duty to choose the language that the people argue and paint in; second, to find those words which will be the clearest-cut and swiftest messengers to the opaque public mind. Words should be swords, knives, needles and pins; they should pierce and draw blood. If your object in writing and speaking is not to bandy words about like a fakir on a street corner, but to drive home into some stupid or responsive brain an idea; if you choose words as a medium only to carry melody or thought, be selective, conscientious, careful, and aim them as you would bullets—at least aim; if you are a marksman with language you will hit here and there at the vitals of a human target and capture a prisoner—or a corpse.

But, if you juggle with words like a showman, and they are not loaded, you are but a harmless fool dedicated to the amusement of the public, and have in all the world but one rival which is none other than the parrot.

A dictionary on legs might be of great service if it had the attribute of omnipresence, but things being as they are, it is more useful in the rack.

Words! words! words! wind-blown feathers! words! sunbeams—hot shot—messengers of life or death!

SILENCE.

Some day, to some few, there will come a language more potent than thunderbolts—the language of silence—the language of the eyes. Message bearers will be as soundless and swift as Mercury when he ran down Olympus with news from Zeus. In fact it is the chief speech of some few even now; the speech of silence which has no suggestion of sound in it other than a faint symbol, that carries the hint of a breath like a statue in marble. The magnetism of man speaks louder than his tongue, but is so seldom translated on earth that the reading is left to the gods. Man is his own revelation, and some day, in a possible Golden Age, wordless, we shall read and re-read each other.

The master mind which dominates the base and uses them for their weal or woe, reads

to himself, and in the presence of his unconscious subjects, interprets the language of each. We call him a student of human nature; he is not, he is a reader, an interpreter. All men speak to him, though their tongues lie idle in their mouths. They speak as a statue speaks, but with a myriad times more power, for they move and act; and he watches and reads, *never out loud*, always to himself. Men wonder that they are understood when they have said no word —when with utmost endeavor they have striven to make Sphinxes of themselves. Men truly never lie; they utter false sounds, but their persons, their faces, their heads, their magnetism, their touch, cry out; and a Napoleon harks, hears, and manipulates. Nature uses parable, metaphor, simile, poetry, disguise, veils, cosmetics, dyes, but Truth is naked in the final manifestation; and Nature's interpreter sees through and beneath all her feminine coquetry deep down to the fact.

We envy these Shakespeares of Humanity —their power and mastership—and well we

may; for surface-skimmers who stake their souls on words, clothes, and apparent environment wield scarcely more power over their kind than do so many fools; they have missed in the reading, and mistake Latin for Sanskrit, Greek for English. To get this mastership over auras and magnetisms, features and bumps, to interpret signs and expressions, to comprehend a man at a glance, to feel sure of him—bone, marrow, fibre, muscle and vitals—to weigh him physically, mentally and divinely, to balance him with others right and left and ascertain his position and place on earth, is easy or not, according to the language you rely on, and the vocabulary you use. If you have grown fat on words, and thrive on sounds; if noisy sounds are a necessity to your clear comprehension, you can make nothing of the silence. If, on the contrary, you have learned to read for yourself, with the dictionary of objective nature at hand, you are the master of stillness, whose everlasting mate is a thunder-clap. The silent work done by the maker of European maps, spoke from

the mouth of a cannon, and the voice of calmness ultimately upheaved Europe with the roar of artillery.

When one reads you with his eye and speaks no word, watch! beware! you may hear later from an unexpected source, a noise that will burst the drums of your ears. He who reads to himself one day, speaks from the rostrum the next. The thunder and lightning of Pericles were preceded by a long calm. Ominous stillness is pregnant with noise. The master of weighty words can hold his tongue for days.

Silence is a Vesuvius, that lazily breathes its black breath into heaven's purity, *apparently* asleep; but mistake not this unnatural stillness for the coma that precedes death. At the heart of Vesuvius is *fire, fire.* It rages upwards and outwards till it pours its lava-speech on helpless cities, and buries them temple-deep in exudations of itself.

He who enters the silent chambers of thought and dreams, comes forth loaded and dangerous; he is a devil or a god, destroyer or builder. On his appearance something is

sure to follow; iconoclastic, he overturns and crushes; synthetic, he organizes and builds; he is chaos or cosmos, incarnate.

"And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." What followed? A thing startling, magnificent—the birth of the world, heralded by the twin of darkness—*light.* A night of silence with the day of action in its wake. Man conceives under the cover of shadow, but manifests in the light to the roar of sound. Be assured, if you are not silent for long hours, days, years, that *you cannot speak.* If you do not face about and enter the Avenues of Self, where Winged Speech hangs over you like a flock of dumb birds, and revel there with the still angels of your own paradise, you can never come forth in voice. The singer who *sings,* utters few words till the stage flashes with her own splendor and the proscenium-vault echoes her transcendent notes. Birds save their music for the love season, and warble loudest after long continence.

The first stage of creation is stillness; the

second, commotion. And the echoes, what of the echoes—the never-dying—heard only by ears celestial, tuned to the music of eternity? Upon the still air falls the echo, softly as the dew on the lily. Only in the silence can you catch the echo, floating by from the otherwise unrecovered past—a faint reverberation of far away scenes and ages. Imperishable echoes! beating about mid ultimate ethers, striking on listening ears in the lonely places, flooding to-day with the story of the long-gone past.

The Mystic hears that which he calls music—a strange blending of battle charge and lullaby. He harks not only backward but across seas, and listens at the door of the Orient, and the gates of the Occident. "All roads lead to Rome." All countries focus in him. Clairvoyant, clairaudiant, he sees and hears; and then equipped and armed with words, steps forth to utter speech that rings around the world and lives in echoes till the Judgment Day.

INSPIRATION.

Can man inspire himself? Hardly, unless he considers that he has a sort of dual consciousness, or a Pure and an Empirical Ego, as some psychologists put it; but leaving this out of the question, can he be inspired by another or by others? From one sense there is no debating the subject, for every one knows that the birds, the flowers, the mountains and stars, in fact all objective nature, including other beings of his own kind, act more or less as inspirations to him, but there is a deeper, subtler aspect. If there are objective inspirations recognized and known, are there possibilities of inspirations the source of which is unknown? Are there influences which steal on man from out the dark, and persuade him with an

uncanny eloquence, but half interpreted, to deeds of great import, for good or evil?

When man conjures within himself he knows without question that the imaginations are his own; some outward suggestion perhaps calls up a train of memories which he marshals and manipulates as would a general a regiment of soldiers. One can, with a little self-investigation, easily discover if the association of ideas is at the bottom of his frame of mind. Analysis is the eye by which he scans his inner self and its conditions.

In most forms of thought, man readily ascertains the first suggestions which instigated, and the objects, persons or memories, which suggested them; so then eliminating in the discussion of this subject all the generally understood and ascertained every day inspirations, which from their very commonness are not called inspirations at all, let us investigate that mysterious unknown which can scarcely be denied, if one take account of himself and watch his many experiences.

There certainly comes at times, rain from a cloudless heaven. There is now and then in a life a thunderbolt in a clear sky. Ideas strike one on occasion, as though shouted at the mental ear from the other side of earth without note of warning—messages not due, arrive at unsuspected hours—a sudden aspect of abstract idea, or consciousness of fact, creating itself out of nothing, and coming from nowhere to shock and awaken a latent potentiality. Study inwardly, on every side, to trace some faint connection of these mysterious appearances and upheavals with your own previously conceived ideas; inspect your environment and surrounding objects for a clue; recall former experiences and memories; try in every way to fit the new link to the previous chain of your being, but you *cannot;* the thought, the imagination, is as strange to you, and as far removed from what you have previously had reason to look for, as unexpected news. No one can *honestly* investigate himself and declare to the contrary.

There certainly *are* experiences in every inner life, even the most ordinary, that can be accounted for neither by association of ideas, memory, suggestion from objective nature in its visible sense, nor verbal communication by word of mouth. For want of a better term, we call these sudden, far-fetched arrivals, which startle us with shocks of surprise, inspirations; they may be unworthy, of the Devil, or a credit to an angel; the question is not of their relative badness or goodness, we simply argue that *they are.*

In making this statement we do not pretend to assert the whys and wherefores, nor do we intend to lamely explain the innermost workings of the law of suggestion. Facts are tremendous things, and almost too much for us without any needless attempts on our part to analyze the majesty of law. We have data in overwhelming amount to prove that there is an Erratic Third method of getting wisdom which comes neither under the head of imagination nor logic. To be sure it must be some finer play of object

upon subject than can be dealt with by eyes and ears. It is none other than the *One Law*, taken out of the region of sense operation into that of an interplay of the outer and inner, where physical eyes and ears are not.

Through historic times the Idea of Inspiration has been comprehended or abused. The Bible teems with "Thus saith the Lord." Mystic and Sibylline books are sacredly preserved in the archives of the various countries, and among the Lares and Penates of nearly every home, in a volume of so-called Revelation.

We do not presume to claim here or anywhere, that the final interpretation of man is found outside his own soul, or that there is really any riddle save the Sphinx of Self; but this aside. The books and inspirations exist and cannot be ignored by one who reads meaning in all things. If the written Sibyllisms are extant, how about the unwritten ones which have been handed down by word of mouth.

If inspiration be outer suggestion, other

than the ordinary which is recognized by ears, eyes, and touch; if seeds of foreign ideas can enter the mind by unknown channels; if after strict analysis we discover a certain percentage (very small) of abstract and concrete conceptions utterly removed from anything we have ever thought, dreamed, or had means of ascertaining; if the inexplicable goes roving round amid the internal explicable, let us tardily admit a probability that objects *out of sight* can reach us by a shock of vibration, and awake within a corresponding potentiality which has lain dormant for ages. Why must we need see *all* that there is with our eyes, or hear all that there is with our ears; are they not clumsy instruments at best? But this is out of order, we seek no whys nor wherefores, we hunt facts.

Have you data sufficient, you ask, to make claim to the old fashioned theory of inspiration, we answer *yes*. No honest, analytic, mathematical person has need to go beyond himself to ascertain this; or if, perchance he make no such discovery, he is the exception

which is *supposed* to prove the rule. Right here, we make bold to state that the genuineness of an inspiration does not depend in the least upon its goodness or badness, it hinges on something *far* different. Outer, unseen suggestion may be intrinsically evil or good; we make claim here *only* that outer unseen suggestion *is.* Having proved this by ourselves, having verified sudden inspiration a hundred times, by after investigations, we plant ourselves firmly upon the *truth* of inspiration carried out of sight and out of sound. And standing there we ask the question, what intrinsic sign of genuineness does it wear, how distinguish the diamond from the paste? First by proof. If a man inform you that your house is burning, you rush out and look; it is easy enough to discover if he lies. If a sudden hint or conviction is shot into your brain without apparent cause, fear or favor, and opens up a possibility of something you had never dreamed, go and verify. But this does not account for the liars you say, those who bombard one with falsehood. To be

sure the Devil may torment you with lies; though of foreign instigation, they lack the dignity of inspiration, because they *amount to nothing.* There is honor even among thieves, and evil inspiration must have at least a basis of fact, in order that it may be acted upon.

Mere suggestion either good or bad, that cannot demonstrate itself in action, is but a child's play at inspiration and not worthy of the term. A true inspiration, in its subtler form, must be capable of expressing and proving itself; evil or good, it must be based on fact, or it is a bursting bubble. Another test, an inspiration comes always as a *surprise,* a *shock;* there is a thrill in inspiration that is unobserved in the sequences from known causes. One inspired is *struck by lightning,* and his whole being takes fire.

Should an unseen finger write a formula upon your brain, try it. If a veritable foreign hand hath written, the formula will prove itself. A receipt for poison, it will kill you; an invigorating potion, it will

heal you. If the letters be scrawled in electric fire, they will leave a tattoo mark on your inner man, which will last to the day of death.

THE FALSE PROPHET.

He has come down the perspective of time like the Wandering Jew; he changes his dress each century, and has the monopoly of fireflies and phosphorus. There is no heat in him, he steals his light like the moon. How he manages to keep going and living is readily explained by the law of polarity; as long as the inspired preach Sermons on the Mount, he must needs be.

All greatness is not of inspiration; a fire as hot may result from spontaneous combustion, and Moses on Sinai, for aught we know, may have originated the table of the Law.

The false prophet is neither an originator nor is he inspired in its high sense; he neither sets fire by his own flame nor by

that caught from another; he reflects and that is all. When a Sun is flashing somewhere in his constellation he holds up a silver shield, catches the rays and throws them into the faces of a curious crowd; he is the satellite ever revolving in the system of fiery star; and serves his false purpose of a verification when the sun is out of sight. We are not such fools as to condemn him; he follows in the trail of the great, gathering the scum of humanity loitering on the way, and teaches them in echoes. Is he false? Yes, because he poses as a genuine star, when he has scarce the dignity of a planet. Like the moon, he keeps clear of the open till the sun has departed, then puts in his appearance under cover of darkness.

If jewels were not, no lapidary would bother about paste. The false prophet, a veritable thief, prowls around the battlefield and rifles the pockets of the wounded and dead, when Truth has hit hard, and laid somebody low.

One truly inspired, or intrinsically great, excites envy and emulation, then comes the

fakir who lights a pitch-pine stick with a lucifer match, and calls it the torch of truth. The mystery of inspiration tickles his fancy, and shrouding himself in robes interwoven with symbols, he strides forth as a high priest of the temple. He is a strange being, this false prophet, and has a fascination for an ignorant class, such as cultivate street speakers and soothsayers. Shrewdness is one of his attributes; he knows the value of mystery and wordless speech, having acquired a sort of semi-wisdom from the luminary whose light he reflects. If he lives today, he apes the Master's methods—patronizes the same tailor, and stops at the same hotel. In past times he was the monkey prophet of his particular age. The false seer is to the genuine, as the gorilla is to man, at his very best only a caricature and an object of derision. Like the crank he licks up those morsels that pamper his own vanity and has no real earnestness in him.

The true seer is rare, and is generally followed by a train of fortune-tellers, charlatans and fakirs as unreliable as the tag-end

of an army; they grade down from full-sized moons to little asteroids no bigger than your fist; they live on the pabulum of superstition, which turns itself into coin and then to bread. When not on the road, they hang out signs and advertise their ethereal wares to those who have fat pockets and unsettled minds; they purport to read your history backward and forward, and the test of their genuiness lies *in the doing*. If tongues of fire sit on their heads, the miracle is apparent; if, however, they are experts in phosphorus, investigation is in order.

Be assured of this, the presence and activity of these innumerable false prophets mean something. The weird moonlight which they reflect proves beyond question, that a fiery Sirius is somewhere on the march in heaven. The more of these fakirs you discover, the more certain you may be that the general has gone ahead.

The false prophet has his mission as surely as the Devil, and as no evil can be *all* evil, and no good can be *all* good, the priests of Baal stand round the altar as an eternal

foil to those others, who called down that unique fire from heaven, endowed with potency to lick up its very enemy—the water in the trench. The fakir emphasizes the Master, the false prophet the priest.

"MY COUNTRY 'TIS OF THEE."

'Tis a strange fancy of modern times that patriotism must needs die with the advance of civilization—that generalization of thought and grasp hinges on universalism of race, language and religion; that the Unit must needs level the Many, and variety ultimately perish in the bosom of the *One.*

When all mineral life shall manifest in the same species of rock; when all plant phenomena shall appear in the same form of tree; when all organized flesh shall stride about in the same type of man; when all stars shall become suns, and all suns of the same magnitude; when Monotony shall sit on a throne under the name of Unity, and shall beat down Variety to the level of a Dead Sea, then, *and not till then,* shall the passion of patriotism go out.

While we, of all people, seek the indissoluble bond which binds man to man, country to country, race to race; while we trace it even in the spaces, and note how it holds planet to planet, sun to sun, constellation to constellation; while we reiterate the axiom that, as is Cosmos so is Microcosmos, yet as vehemently, as emphatically do we assert that the figure *one,* standing for a celestial, indivisible unit, implies the figure two, three, four, and so on endlessly. And though we discover constant law and eternal principle in mind, we, at the same time stumble over the divisibility and variety in matter under the guise of the shifting phenomena of change. Keeping before our mental telescope then the two suns, revolving as double or single stars according to the length of our sight, we daringly affirm that forever and forever there will be shades of difference in the lives and environments of animals, men, and angels, that shall necessitate variety of location and habitat. In consequence an inextinguishable patriotism. "My Country 'tis of Thee."

As surely as man becomes *individualized,* will the very vales, rivers and mountains of his native soil cry out the story; not only in the architecture of its temples and palaces, but in the very poise of its mountains and the song of its streams. The environment takes on the dignity of the man; by some subtlety it catches the spell that is on him, and the very stones and grasses preach.

When I sing of my country, I sing of myself. The battle hymn of my Republic is mine; my flag is dyed with my own heart's blood, and starred with my very eyes; my heaven is in it, and its stainlessness is my honor. My power *to be* is my country's power, and an exile, I carry my land with me in a ceaseless dream.

Oh no, he who would seek to pitch all nations to the same tune, who would dress all peoples in the same garb, and in spite of a twist in the tongue, put the same words in all mouths, who would relegate all forms of worship to a portable church, is devoid the sense of variety which means also the loss of the grasp on unity; for one who is great

enough to see the center of the world's wheel will see, also, the spokes and the circumference.

That earth is tending more and more to an universal exchange of ideas I will not deny; that wires and bands of steel are on solid ground, as well as in the blue above, and the blue below, I should be a fool to ignore; I simply assert, that interchange and exchange, do not in any sense have a levelling effect, but, on the contrary, impel and substantiate a pregnant individuality. The very variety which results from exchange, emphasizes the Master in the man, by startling him into a consciousness of his Unit of Force, which, for all time, backward as well as ahead is *his* and his *alone*.

"My Country 'tis of Thee," whether its shores are washed by two seas or encircled by one; whether its flag flaunts many colors or a lone star; whether it be edged with icebergs or fringed with lillies; whether its sharp crags pierce dread skies, or its laughing waters are tickled by the Sun's fingers;

whether it is poor or rich, old or young, "My Country 'tis of Thee."

A jewel on Earth's breast, mine eyes have beheld your sparkle since I first opened them to the light—precious beyond compare, though you be but a pebble—somehow you have caught the sunlight and flashed it up to me, till I have burned with your reflected fires, and in the mirror of *you,* all jewels have glittered. At your very bosom have I sucked the milk of a divine altruism, which thrills me with the intense egoism of its eternal mate.

There is a sword sharper than the famed blade of Damascus, keener than the glittering steel of Japan; 'tis the two-edged weapon of defense, which, ground and shining, ever dangles at the belt of the *individual.* Quick as lightning he draws upon the enemy to his Nation's honor, which means his own, and in cleaving right and left for his country he vindicates the right of all Nations *to be,* and of all *individuals to live.*

CONVENTIONAL OPINION.

Do you think it easy to face about and stem the tide of Conventional Opinion? If so, I ask you if it is easy to swim up stream; I ask you if it is easy to fly, to walk on water, to suspend the action of poison, or prevent the oncoming of death.

A general idea seems extant among men, that the majority must necessarily be right, and it is pretty apt to be the case that they are, if right means a certain agreed upon state of things which gives satisfaction to the mass. People get accustomed to the conditions, and hate the upheaval which arises from a change of base, even though the alternative broaden their possibilities. A Galileo is generally tortured in some form or other when he first asserts himself; for the very shock to the inertia of being,

which results from the possibility of a world moving is beyond toleration; and though the pioneer of a truth whispers, *"E pur'si muove!"* a hundred times, he still does penance at the command of the Inquisition.

When a minority of *one* faces a majority of the world's balance, *he must be entirely sure of himself,* otherwise he is trampled to earth and ground to powder. The secret, sad satisfaction felt by an untimely discoverer, of a something which must inevitably overturn the settled opinion of every dogmatic religionist or scientist on earth, is more of pain than pleasure. He knows his danger well, and is fully aware that his safety depends absolutely upon the first move; single and unarmed he must conquer a band of howling wolves, with the divine glance of his eye. All the Bibles of all the Cults are bound to be thrown at his head, and all the curses of all the churches roared in his ears. He will be jeered at and spit upon, torn to pieces and devoured by an outraged crowd, unless he can so

flash his truth upon them, that they shall become temporarily blind. Ere they fully recover he must pile proof upon proof, evidence upon evidence, till, stunned, hypnotized, lost in wonder, he catches them on the rebound and towers above their unwilling heads *absolute master.*

Is it any wonder in face of this, that the discoverer along the lines of art, science, religion, philosophy, hoards his treasure as though it were a subtle poison, too precious for aught save himself, who might at any moment most ardently desire an instantaneous departure to the other world.

To overthrow Conventional Opinion is to uproot religion, and reduce clerical salaries; it causes empty pews in the Cathedral and modifies the sale of bibles; it unseats College Professors, severs the chains of women and educates children; it levels caste and exonerates the monkey; it changes the location of Heaven and alters the whereabouts of Hell.

Power! Power! The secret manipulator of the finances of Europe is infantile

compared with one who has discovered something revolutionary, and carries the proof in his pocket; some bit of explosive that shall blow up the Pacific and rift a continent. There may be no new thing possible under the sun, but remember the celestial luminary is very old, and the historic age is but a dot in time. To all intents and purposes, as far as our present memories are concerned there is a deal that is *new;* and the appearance of each darer of Conventional Opinion, who has a *right* to dare, is followed by an *upheaval.*

If you love smooth sailing, summer seas and dead calm, be extremely careful how you defy Public Opinion with either a discovery or an idea, *especially an idea.* If you are fond of love-lit eyes of approval and a pat on the back, agree with your ancestors and contemporaries, agree with everybody, approve everybody. If the crowd fight among themselves, agree with the last man at the last place. If you are caught in the rabble, *keep still,* for the love of heaven refrain from committing yourself.

In this way you will obtain fat positions, and liberal emoluments; an idol of society, the flower of a season, your tomb will be inscribed with an eulogy, and history will gloat upon your name—for a generation—but later—Ah me!

If you prefer temporary fame to eternal glory, if you would deck your brow with fading flowers rather than the bay, if a decade of splendor is all that you demand, let Conventional Opinion have its way; swallow accepted creeds with your meals and permit the prevailing idea to manifest itself in your clothes; be in fashion or die. But if a certain starry truth has caught your eye, one so dim that only your long sight has sensed it, invent your telescope, set it upon the street corner and invite the crowd to look; though they dread the evidence of their own senses and stone you to death later on, an enthusiastic people will erect your monument at the cost of their own jewels, while they keep the grass on your grave green by showers of precious tears. All this, if you deserve it; but if not, bury your

knowledge in your breast, as did the Hermetic Seers of the middle ages, and grow strong upon the consolation of your hoarded wealth. This is but a matter of choice; as a man sows so shall he reap. The coward has a temporary reward, the brave an *eternal.* The miser gloats and the Sage is satisfied.

If you have gone far in the teachings of a certain cult your priest will talk to you thus: "The mass of the world sit down and weep because the stars do not drop in your laps; once in a while, some one brave enough builds a ladder and climbs to a star. If you look for examples you will find them extremely few; if you read biography, it will be like a blow in your face. Your business is to defy tradition, challenge fate and make *your* own mark though it be a revelation in chirography. Write your own book of fiction, and reverse all things that ever were written; begin with a marriage and end with true love; start with a funeral and close with a wedding. Let eternity take time by the forelock, and crowd yesterday and to-morrow into to-day.

"The boast of the Philosopher is, that he has discovered something; the boast of the Master is that he has applied something. Science supposes an ether, the Master merges himself into it; Art paints a picture, the Master realizes it; Music sings a song, the Master becomes one of the notes.

"You enter the gateway of the road, and you stare up at this monstrosity and shiver. You are not afraid but you find no vulnerable point; he is as rigid as a rock, and you crawl up his feet like an insect; he has no idea that you are there. Let me tell you something, sting him, sting him deep and sharp, again and again, keep on, from his toes to his ears. He will squirm and howl, keep on, crawl over him, be quick and spry, he is so slow that he cannot catch you. You can never destroy him, never, but make him frantic; he will dance about; then slip past, he will never know. In fact you will get the better of him.

"Now this creature which you have conquered is Conventional Belief. He is turning to stone; he will be a statue some day;

his blood flows so sluggishly now that it took a long time for you to make an impression. Some day he will crumble to pieces on his own account, but you have no time to wait for that, *sting him.* We warn you that it is hard, terrible, but we promise you that at the end of it such power as Christ had. 'In what,' you ask us, 'lie these extreme difficulties?' and we answer that the first and hardest consists in your inherent *obstinacy;* not an intentional obstinacy, but in that something which inheritance has given."

Thus speaks a certain priest; whether his sermon be wise is left for you to decide. Be assured of this however, if you seek the Crest of Olympus and the Halls of the Immortals, dare, if you have discovered the torch of a so-called *truth,* to wave it over the heads of an indignant crowd even at the risk of being burned to death. Your funeral pile will become an inextinguishable flame of Vesta, on whose luster the purity of the world's Rome will hinge.

HELL.

Imagine a Nineteenth Century Dante starting out to explore Hell, and suppose he takes as companion a Virgil of the Middle Ages. Let his descent into the nether world be from a local point, and his record of the same be printed and preserved as a standard upon the subject among the moderns. He would tell of his wanderings amid the shades of the dead, followed speedily by his explorations among the haunts of the living. The negative hall of the departed, being far removed from the awe inspiring inferno of the denizens upon this side. So having shaken the impalpable dust of the region of ghostland from his sacred feet, let us see where he locates the place called Hell, and how, after much searching, he found it.

First he sought, in company with his laurel-crowned bard, the dim alleys and underground haunts of the great city; using the prerogative of the Sage, he disguised himself and his attendant in an atmosphere of opaque mist. Draped in the celestial aura which passes everywhere for a phenomenal bit of fog, he secretly investigated the ghastly rendezvous of murderers and thieves, watching and listening with intense interest to their plots and incredible schemes. They seemed nervous, suspicious, afraid, and yet he detected a flavor of insane bliss in their lives; the spice of danger had an exhilerating effect, and kept remorse somewhat at bay; monotony and ennui had no meaning for these restless blood-letters and robbers. The element of change was rampant among them and a certain close fraternity which satisfies the longing of every heart, no matter how bad, and repudiated in their case the possibility of Hell. Even among these apparently irreclaimable souls, existed bonds of affection and possibilities of variety which necessitated heat and light. Their

very plots and schemes called into play the intellectual faculties to a far greater degree than the demands made upon them in ordinary life; they had nerve, action, thought, emotion, fraternity, excitement, nearly all of the qualifications which a soul in Hell has not. So Dante and Virgil turned their backs, having been electrified by the uncanny fascination of the place, to seek the Inferno elsewhere.

Next they penetrate the haunts of shame, where vice outdoes itself, and the beast in man strangles the angel. Here surely must Hell be. No ray of light can penetrate the closed shutters of the prostitute, or warm the heart of the courtesan. But wait—habit dulls the edge of vice, and automatic prostitution, like eating and drinking, becomes an almost unconscious necessity; apart from the body, the soul in a creature blinks, and if it finds a reflector anywhere, will glory in its own sheen. The crowded condition of this universal Yoshiwara, the necessity for the adornment of the victims of the same, the tinsel splendor with its snake glitter,

unsuccessfully emulated by the aspiring denizens of respectable streets, the risk and danger, the tottering elevation of an occasional inmate, the gratified vanity, the exchange of sentiment, idea and affection among themselves, all tend to veil vice in glamour, and substantiate a sort of superficial heaven, bubbling with a wine-instilled pleasure, which is a long way removed from Hell. Even in the wilderness of streets where a famished Hager wanders, too old, too ugly, to evoke an answering smile, even there shines a ray of hope, and a responsive glance of pity now and then caught from sympathetic eyes. The abandoned know not Hell; and Dante, weeping, turned away.

Slowly from the slums and haunts of vice he ascended to the avenues of the rich; an invisible guest, he sought the domestic hearth where a suspicious wife watched, with half-shut eyes, the vagaries of an uncertain mate. And he discovered that even though the marriage vow meant no more than an unholy promise, even though infidelity were as fashionable as divorce, even though opinions

on the relations of the sexes were as loose as humanity's conception of dogma, in spite of this he found on the avenues of the rich, in the homes of the fashionable as in the haunts of the poor, a percentage of happiness, and an utter absence of the condition which he conceived as Hell.

And then he sought the church and sat under the droppings of the sanctuary, with some faint idea that here extremes would meet; that in the whited sepulcher were rotting dead men's bones, and that under the vestment of the priest beat the heart of the arrant hypocrite. His eyes wandered along the pews and up into the dim splendors of the arches, when low, upon his ears there stole soft streams of melody, as if veiled angels were playing harps before the throne. In ecstacy of sadness, with Virgil by his side, he stole along the receding nave out into the sunlight, to shake the liquid notes of melody from his trembling soul, as birds shake raindrops from their wings. "Where music is, is heaven," said he; and henceforth he kept far off from concert halls,

and houses where the feet in mazy dance keep time to thrilling notes.

He sought the slaughter shambles, where dumb beasts with eyes like hunted stags are murdered by the last device of science, which in its very mystery is cruelty well-dressed. "Alas! he who draws the cup of blood has rosy cheeks—Heli is not here," said he.

Out in the suburbs he descried a hut where dwelt the miser—the fabled anchoret who conquers time, and dies to live again—his eyes were yellow from reflecting gold, his long nailed fingers glittered like gilt pens, a sun of gold above his head, streets paved with precious stuff. Could this be Hell? And Dante whispered into Virgil's ear, "He who gloats on other than *himself*, even though it be but dross, *escapeth* Hell."

And then, as speedily as sunbeam finds the earth, he sought the "*upright* man." He met him in the mart of trade, erect and cold—a statue with uplifted eyes. His atmosphere was frigid like the Arctic Zone, his look was blank, his touch was ice; he

loved none other than himself, nor was he loved. Correct beyond compare, his fault of faults was that of having none. When not raised to the vacant sky, his eyes turned inward, searching vaguely through the icy avenues of self, for some warm place, some flickering flame of that imperishable fire which even the wicked keep alive; but the embers were concealed far down beneath an avalanche of snow, and all was cold—cold. He lived in one perpetual chill, and shivered with a moral ague, even in the sun. Nothing without was his—no mirror, however foul, in earth, or sea, or sky, threw back to him a picture of himself—and gazing on the endless, frozen sea within, no tears dropped from his eyes to melt the icebergs drifting there. *He suffered* as does one long-damned. His Ego-eye stared—stared at self, and would not be put out; it froze, back in his head, and still it saw his intellect, full conscious to its very core, undying, icy, *beheld—beheld* a second self, congealed and stark. Whence, then, this wish to feel, while all that man calls *heart* is dead?

"Ah Virgil," whispered Dante, "The heart can *never* die; a smouldering fire in him; it gnaws as does an insect at the tree's tap-root; and while he freezes yet he burns. Pent up, with no volcanic vent, he stands, a snow-capped mountain, seething with internal fire. No object hath he but himself on which to spend his flame. Behold a vulture pecking at his breast, whose beak is hotter than a fiery barb, while on his head there rests a crown of ice. At last we pause, our quest is done, for *this is Hell!*

* * * * * *

Ah! Ah! Ah! And we Divines of the Nineteenth Century spend hours towering over our congregations, debating the probability or improbability of a literal hell; we ponder long days whether it is beneath us in the bowels of the earth, or on some far-off star devoted to infernal damnation. We, in the face of science and comprehensive research, wonder if the blaze is the actual result of physical combustion, and whether an unlimited supply of unfortunate meteors are shoveled into the insatiate furnace by a

relay of horned and grinning devils. *Actually* in the dawn of the Twentieth Century since Christ, the same college bred men who waste their brain fiber on the infallibility of the penal inspiration of Jewish scriptures, lavish it also on what that infallibility might mean in its interpretation of Hell.

Of all the amazing exhibitions of high culture which this enlightened century has produced, this is by far the most astonishing. The wonder lies in the fact, that these same Divines and college savants preach science one moment and hell-fire the next; or if they modify their Inferno to a mild form of burning, that they seek an *actual place* where the eternal immolation shall go on. Never was the inconsistency of an age so manifest as in ours.

Hell!! as though it were sometime *hereafter,* and not *now;* as though it were on the verge of the universe, and not *here;* as though one small speck of a life, averaging scarce thirty years, were to be the gateway to an Inferno or a Paradise.

The level head and pulsing heart cry

out against such dogma as unworthy a Nineteenth Century Priest or Sage, and hearing the cry, out steps the Dante of Hades to repudiate this false notion, with the irresistible logic of fact.

NIRVANA.

It is amusing to read the oft reiterated interpretation of Nirvana. Those of us who belong to the Orient smile, and those of us who live in the Occident laugh. The conception seems to have gone abroad that the Nirvana is a state of being akin to the hypnotic trance—a placid placidity whose calmness is that of a dead desert—that the Nirvana is a smiling Buddha with eyes heavy with sleep, or a prostrate statue that stares vacantly upward and never winks. Pardon our sarcasm, but in face of modern interpretation we deem ourselves excusable.

If Paradise might be described as a swinging garden hung with uncertain ropes over a precipice, if Heaven is the refuge of all fugitives from Hell; then Nir-

vana, by law of antithesis, must necessarily be the cosmic spinning, which defies chaos and holds by its very excess of motion, the orderly universe in its place. To be sure, in its literal interpretation, Nirvana means to blow out, and we make no objection to the putting of this construction on the term. He who knows nothing of the Nirvanic *poise* which arises from an acceleration of motion, who has no realization that the still fixedness of the stars means terrific speed, or that the bird, calm on the wing, is quivering with an invisible velocity. He who knows naught of this, has no conception of the meaning of Nirvana. The apparent blowing out of chaos in man, by the ascendency of cosmos, the giving way of disorder and unbalance to the reign of order and poise, necessitates the vanishing of some thing, and the term seems true to itself. There is in reality however, no extinction except in appearance. The potentiality to the chaotic exists in nature, in spite of the *law* of Nirvana (in the Orient it is called a

law) nevertheless, the *poise,* resulting from *rapid* motion in life once established, the chaotic tendency, while evident in consciousness, is not manifested in action.

Life! Life! Life! There is a speed of it that holds one balanced in the blue, where heaven is said to be, and thrills one with the rapture that inevitably follows on motion which generates heat and flame.

It is harder to paint Nirvana than to gild the wings of Love. The ever shifting point of view which the poise of motion brings, the panorama of landscape, the sun-kissed seas and ice-walled kingdoms, the land where milk and honey flows, the parched but *glorious* desert, the depths beneath, the heights above, the garden, the tree of life, the serpent and the angel—Paradise!—Nirvana!—Heaven!—Ecstacy! But where? On Earth, *here, now.*

Move faster—faster; burn—warmer—warmer, shift your glance from point to point—see Heaven, see Hell—look north, south, east, west, and everywhere—*Be! Be! Be!* And on you will steal the calm

of motion; along with you will fly a dove of peace. The reaction of action will be lost in the central poise of ultimate life, and the rebound from extremes swallowed in the vortex of the mean, where the eternal fires of self are in full flame.

GHOSTS AGAIN.

The subject returns periodically, and sweeps over a locality somewhat after the manner of an epidemic. Man has a rythmic appetite for ghosts, and indulges it in accordance with the relation of supply and demand. The vast majority of ghost seekers are after excitement; take note that when business is dull, the country at peace, and stage stars and melo-dramas scarce, there will be an upstart-tendency in the otherwise stupid city or town to go ghost hunting. Secret meetings will be held by respectable citizens, who would seem by their mysterious airs to be seriously plotting against the government but not at all, they are making a raid on ghostland, nothing more. The very preparations for this are interesting; the children,

if there are any, are smuggled into their beds, as though they were stolen property; the doors are locked and barred, the blinds shut and the curtains drawn; all lights are extinguished, and darkness thick enough to be felt is the desired result.

The crusaders who are preparing for this mysterious expedition into nowhere, speak in whispers, as if the denizens of ether might hear them in advance. Somehow these seekers have for a long time felt that ghosts must have a table; why, it is hard to understand, but like many inexplicable things, it is so. Possibly the four-legged magnet serves as a sort of centralizing focus from whence a phantom can glide with sinuous agility like a serpent from a lair; however, a table there must be, if the still more mysterious cabinet is out of the question. Next the assembled investigators must *necessarily* clasp hands; the thrill which follows this is beyond the power of pen to portray; there is a subtle shiver in it pregnant with fear—that delicious dread which is inevitably attendant upon the mysterious

unknown—it contains a hint of the awful charm of birth and death, and is an experience without which life would be incomplete. What follows all these numerous uncanny preparations? Sometimes something, sometimes nothing. A weary waiting of silence, now and then broken by the singing of hymns, will occasionally result in what is called phenomena and again in an honest defeat. The invaders occasionally beat the ghost, but more often the ghost beats them.

But what of this phenomena which is sometimes obtained? Ask Profs. Crooks, Wallace, or Zoelner; they weigh and measure ghosts with all the nicety of test machines. If you but use their method you may find a fact or two, unless, here comes the great difficulty, unless you lose your head; and the chances are that you will do that very thing; even though a student of the exact sciences, once having crossed the sacred threshold of the sceance room, you are most likely a different man.

The situation is strange, and utterly devoid of the *glare of day* that floods science.

The magnetism of your neighbors of both sexes is distracting. The *hurt* attitude of many of the investigators, if the slightest doubt is expressed; a difficulty of establishing conditions which is unheard of in most scientific investigations; the attitude of *yourself*, which is liable to be exceedingly aggressive or unusually meek and bland; in fact the almost utter impossibility of getting used to the situation; all these make it the hardest imaginable place to undertake thorough *scientific* investigation. If you see something, a floating light, or a hazy phantom which you are sure no trickery can produce, your credulity, in spite of yourself, is always shadowed with doubt, and never to your dying day can you feel quite certain; again, there is no proof that that phantasmal something that you saw was what it professed to be; however this cuts no figure. If it really were a phantom with all a phantom's attributes, it were certainly a valuable thing to have and hold in memory, as a particular photograph of Satan, if nothing more.

As we have said before, on this subject, *get facts* if you can; no fact is diabolic, *as a fact.* The dangers of diabolism in the sceance room do not lie in the verities found there, but in the falsehoods. We are not intending to commit ourselves on ghosts as to whether they are or not, in the generally understood sense. Your opportunities of finding out are possibly better than ours. We have no objection to them, nor beyond the possibility of them to appear, do we find them especially interesting. They so exhale their individuality in their effort to *become,* that the phantom that introduces itself at last, is too transparent to weigh much either physically or otherwise. Of course we are speaking now of the harmless ghost, who is worth nothing except as a fact. But against those others that haunt houses and destroy the value of property by the menace of their presence, terrifying weak women and children in dark places, against those terrible, devilish ghosts that return to commit murder in pantomime, and turn one's hair gray in a night, we

hurl anathemas. From the point of data they are valuable beyond compare; but from that of law and order, altogether undesirable.

The subject is endless, fascinating, startling. If flesh and blood stand correlated to a phantom, then has the ghost business to be, and all our efforts to down him will be as fruitless as those of the conjurers of Banquo. Besides there is another aspect, which has an essence of consolation in it; the everlasting phantom makes a material eternity possible in some form or other, and substantiates the non-destructibility of matter.

Hail then ye spirits of the vasty deep! for by your subtle entities, we become aware of ourselves as solid, irrepressible verities.

THE LAW OF RYTHM.

It must have been noticed by this time, by those who have followed the drift of these essays, that a law, veiled perhaps but definite, well understood by the Orient though scarcely grasped by the Occident, is the fundamental text of them all. This principle of polarity, accepted in speculative psychics, yet *rarely reduced to practice,* is none other than the philosopher's stone; and the comprehension and application of the same, must necessarily make of man a Master by the acquisition of power which the knowledge and *practice* bring. The aim of all philosophies is to discover Unity—to find in the heterogeneous maze of variety a stable constancy, or indivisible chain which shall link event to event, change to change.

Some law must certainly lie at the base of being which shall justify its very outbursts into multiple phenomena. The changeable must be the twin of the changeless, that Unity, the philosopher's quest, may be established. What is this law? It is action and reaction, or *rythm*.

Before we go farther in this debate, we must postulate immortal Units of force and being, that swing like the pendulum of a clock between two extremes of expression, now at or near the limit in one direction, and again upon the verge in the other. To postulate *Units* of force and being, is more consistent with law and phenomena than to postulate a Unit of force and being. Assuming as a first principle, that variety can only be accounted for because it has *always been*, and that unity has no *possibility* except in an *eternity* of *variety*, we boldly declare that each individual Unit of force, consciousness, and being, always was and will ever be; there can exist no *One*, without the many, nor many without the One. Upon this constancy of force generation in each individual

Unit we base variety, necessitated by the interdealing of these Units, one with the other; now potential, again kinetic; moving, bombarding, and interplaying among themselves eternally.

The constant Unity in the individual, today called man, existed ere the morning stars sang their first hymn in the dawn of an *apparent* creation. Back of protoplasmic expression is the potential divinity of each *being*, which appearing in a million forms up to its high tide of rythm, has been christened with a myriad names, from Ameba to Jah-Jehovah. But as the mighty ocean has its limit tide, so has the sea of an entity, and included in it are lower forms of action and reaction down the ripple of an hour's emotion. The limitation then in an individual Unit of force (calling it in the present argument *man*) lies in his *rythmic swing;* this being greater or less in proportion as it exhausts his generative power, and according to the amount that each Unit's generative power *is*. The will (desire) of an individual Unit seems to have,

through motion, the power of generating a certain amount of energy in a given time, and the limit of this power and time can only be decided by the rythm of his being from its finality of reaction to the corresponding acme of action, and vice versa. Given then innumerable Units of force, with an immortality behind as well as ahead of them, the basic law of their being —that of action and reaction, or rythm— each having a longer or shorter swing of its pendulum according to its force generative power, some in degree potential, others extremely energetic, and we have, as a natural corollary, an eternal variety backed by perpetual unity. The homogeneous and heterogeneous (everlasting mates) coming out in expression in so-called evolution, means nothing other than the tremendous rythm of a cycle of these Units of being.

The ascent of man from Hugo's tadpole to an arch-angel, is the long swing of his pendulum to his extreme of life and consciousness, nothing more, nothing less. And as the power to generate energy im-

plies involution as well as evolution (for force must be constant) we retire back finally to a non-destructible Ego or Will, whose very egoism hinges on its indivisible unity, while its consciousness can in no way be maintained save through eternal Egos, more or less like itself, which act as reflectors of its own being. Placing ourselves upon this premise, we repudiate Creation in the orthodox or biblical sense, and religiously declare in the name of Almighty Truth, that something never yet came forth from nothing; and though we preach the *new* from morning until night, year in and year out, it is after all but a rythmic return of the *old*, called forth from potentiality into activity, with a gloss and sheen upon it that exhilerates, as though it never had been. The Creation which we contemplate and the Creation of dogma are in no way related; the former we repudiate altogether and forever.

But what of this rythm? As the earth turns on its axis each day, and revolves around the sun each year, and travels through space on its long journey toward a

terrible magnet whose fiery eye draws it irresistably onward; as within itself it is moving from its internal fire outward to its cold crust, so man, in his Unit energy, is consciously whirling about on his diurnal axis, finding his two poles of being in his night and day—sleeping and waking—at the same time making his annual circuit around some star of his spiritual constellation, discovering his winter and summer or cold and heat, each year of his life—freezing or burning—while unconsciously or consciously rushing on in his evolutionary march up the arc of his ethereal sky, toward an unseen zenith; where, like the sun, having apparently paused for an instant, he plunges down the steeps of impalpable blue, and round again to meet the extreme pole of himself, having completed a grand cycle of individual existence.

But asserting this as law, what of the application? How make out of it the philosopher's touch-stone by which he detects the gold of power? Man knows very well that he begins earth life as an infant; that he

grows and waxes strong, till having passed youth he finds himself in full prime, here to practically poise for a term of years before he takes the down grade, traveling back to a second childhood, when he often becomes as bald, toothless, and helpless as when first born. From low tide to high tide, from high tide to low, that is all; potential, kinetic—kinetic, potential.

But rythm is a wheel within a wheel; in the cycle there are the lives; in the lives the years, in the years the months, in the months the weeks, in the weeks the day. There is rythm in disease, in health, in joy, in sorrow; the circle is always forming, or rather the spiral; extremes come round to meet and pass extremes; agony merges into unconsciousness, and ecstacy into despair. This has always been realized, but rarely understood and practically dealt with. We prate about pain and pleasure, but who applies the mathematics of rythm to the same and regulates his life accordingly; who counts on his periodicity as he does on his bank stock, and deals with it as so much

capital in hand? Far off in old China this was done by one Confucius who prophesied with the accuracy of a seer, purely by the law of periodicity.

The sage reckons on the reaction as well as on the action; he carries the well-known maxim of physics up into psychology and makes of the latter much-abused study, a *science.* He ignores the modern loose method of speculative metaphysics, and reckons on his mind as he does on his body, by the imperishable principle of rythm; postulating for himself an eternal entity, he counts on his cycles, his lives, his years, as an expert figures on the tides of the sea. He knows that there are hours in the day when life ebbs, and when it flows; he calculates the point when the tide will turn, and prepares for the low, by his measurement of the high.

Man as a rule is a puppet of rythm, tossed about on his sea of being; true to the Law, but all unconscious of its meaning. If he calculates, it is in the first four rules of arithmetic; he stores up money

for sickness and old age, prepares for funeral expenses and a monument, builds a house for his descendants, and banks on a reward in heaven. He never dreams that his law of periodicity holds within it its own reward, and that having failed in the reading, he has missed the philosopher's stone. He is always striking out for a place and never arriving; he whirls round and round like a man who is drunk; he chases butterfly ideals and catches them to break their wings and soil his hands with dust. Within his very self is the high tide of the *minute,* and he loses its splendor in watching for that of the hour. He sits down in sack-cloth and ashes when the *ebb* of himself comes on, as though the beginning of the *flow* were not then at his very heart. Instead of bringing to bear upon his soul's rythm a mental comprehension, he suffers himself to be deluged by the flow of emotion, or left high and dry by its corresponding ebb.

Ah, man! man! puppet of fate! even more than the beast, the insect or bird.

Unreasoning reason has despoiled you of the instinct of the gnat, and left you stranded on a jagged rock somewhere twixt sky and sea. Should you reason less, you would evolve from yourself the *unerring* brute; more, the panoplied sage. But now, dabbler in logic! spurner of instinct! you are neither wise nor a fool. A slave to the law of periodicity, you fail to find in it the touch-stone of *being;* because blindfolded, you have endured and enjoyed, but have in no way understood.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE OTHER CHEEK.

And Jesus said, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." For nearly nineteen centuries this has been preached from pulpit and rostrum to greedy ears as the ultima thule of negation and self-sacrifice. It has been lauded as the acme of saint-ship, and the attainment of the power to thus do has been urged as the unfailing passport to celestial bliss. With open mouths and tear-streaming eyes the world has imbibed this teaching as something *utterly foreign* to the normal man, and therefore of divine and supernatural origin. The capacity to practice the same is presumed to be cautiously bestowed upon beings favored of heaven,

and given, alas! to those only that are saved from eternal damnation. We have nothing to say against this teaching; it is as grand as any truth ever propounded, but we utterly condemn the *interpretation* of the same, and assert it to be false, and at variance with a well-known law. We also make claim to the possibility, aye the probability, of the use and abuse of this principle by the Devil and all of his descendants since time began. The motive which inspires the turning of the other cheek may be noble or otherwise—alas! it is *often* otherwise. There are two ways of resisting an enemy; one in giving blow for blow, the other in refusing to fight. The first is meeting like with like, fire with fire. Anger is extinguished in this way, either by death or conquest and neutrality and calmness consequently restored.

A school of physicians battles disease after this fashion, inaugurating a tussle of smallpox with smallpox, hydrophobia with hydrophobia, by inoculating the patient with a dose of his anticipated disorder. It

is the hand to hand fight with cutlasses, swords and knives. This is supposed to be the *ungodly* method, used by the black-browed children of original sin. Resentment, which is another word for resistance, has been condemned by "civilized" races from time immemorial, but practiced sub silentio nevertheless.

But as we have said, there are two ways of resisting; the second, as truly normal as the first, with no taint of the so-called supernatural about it, is the turning of the other cheek; or that method employed by another school of medicine which neutralizes the action of one disease by administering something which will bring on the *opposite*. Extremes neutralize each other; a meeting of the positive with the negative causes an interblending and undermining of either.

Defenseless things from all time, through the love of life, have somehow struck upon this law, and have made of it a veritable life-preserver, as helpful as the bloated bladder to a drowning man. Woman, in the innocence of her deceit, has kissed away man's

wrath, since Eve was made; whether through love or *hate* it makes no difference; her smile, her embrace, her soft other cheek, though but a mask to hide her stormy heart, disarms him, un-mans him, more surely than a right-hand blow. How can he rage at kisses, or strike at clinging arms; he feels himself a fool, and beat, more truly than if knocked down, and battered in the arena by a conquering champion.

But leaving woman out of the question, let us resort to animals as an illustration. All hunters understand, in fact it is well known, that numerous creatures "play dead" when at bay, and so perfectly simulate a lifeless corpse, that the chase and brutal conquest are utterly devoid of charm. To trample upon an apparently extinct life, to kill something seemingly dead, has too little of excitement in it to spur the hunter to the exercise of his power. The very "playing dead" is enough to disarm the hunter, and though he knows the ruse, he scorns to strike at the limp helplessness so utterly in his power; nay more,

he laughs at his emotion when he sees the lifeless thing pull itself together and vanish with the swiftness inspired by fright. The hunter is beat by the law of his own being; he would be more than monster to strike an apparently non-resistant creature, which by the principle of the meeting of extremes is in reality the most *resistant* thing on earth. Children are utterly irresistible because they cannot resist at all; likewise the infirm and aged.

Note then, the wisdom of the Master, the Nazarene; His only hope of a promulgation of His system of truth, lay in the *resistance* of *non-resistance.* To be sure this method sometimes fails, as does the other of fighting fire with fire, but with the mass of mankind, it works its own sweet will again, and yet again. Whether human nature changes or not, principles are eternal, and the application of the well known law was worth the trying.

There is another aspect of the question; to be in love with, full of something, no matter what—a country, an idea, or a per-

son, for the time being precludes the hate which it is necessary to arouse in order that one may actively retaliate. Christ commanded that His disciples think on Him; "Lovest thou me?" "What, could ye not watch with *me* one hour?" He held himself ever before them like a suspended crucifix, as an object upon which to dwell; He hypnotized them with His glance, not from selfishness, but because of the majesty of the Law. Full of Him, seeing, hearing naught but Him, symbolized at the right hand of God, even in the skies, they were utterly incapacitated for literal retaliation; and making themselves incapable of hate through an excess of love, turned their right cheeks for the enemy's blows, and stripped themselves of their cloaks as well as their coats, at the enemy's demand. They lost life to save it, and thus worked out a subtle principle of philosophy which is nothing else than the neutralization resulting from opposing opposites.

That this is the greatest of principles, we are not prepared to admit; when dealing

with laws, there is no great nor small. It is left with the judgment of man to rightly use or abuse this paradox of resistant non-resistance. That it gives a more extended scope for hypocrisy and dissimulation than the robust method of out and out warfare we admit; that it is pregnant with the mild lying of women, children, animals and insects we well understand, yet as all things, in order to exist and thrive, must have weapons of defense, if Nature has provided some of her children with smiles, soft cheeks and a power to love, we can not question the integrity of her who seeks to preserve her beautiful unarmed progeny, as well as those who are born equipped for battle.

The wisdom of the Sage of Syria can never be disputed; it was far too subtle for a universal interpretation, and consequently has been abused and misunderstood. The "Three baskets" of Guatama, have been unpacked and comprehended, but it takes a philosopher to read between the lines of the New Testament, and unravel the parable-paradox in which the Nazarene gloried.

THE PREACHER.

It is not essential that you go to church to find him; the temple is everywhere and the preacher is within yourself. He is an encumbrance to most of you, however, so you provide him with no audience, and pay him no salary. You stop your mental ears lest you hear his persuasive voice, and deaf, you desecrate the sanctuary and turn the holy of holies into a counting house or a brothel.

There is much said on the highways and byways about the voice of conscience; as though there were a veritable divinity, sitting aloft in the soul of man, acting as absolute dictator, and punishing or rewarding as he is obeyed or disregarded. This idea is

founded upon truth certainly; and we would only add, that each monarch preaches a somewhat different code from every other, reads a different hymn at the beginning of the sermon, and declares a new cult each time he speaks. If conscience means knowledge (and it does) it must certainly be variable according to the advancement of a given Ego along the lines of experience. Judgment, which is the finality of one's knowledge, determines man's acts for him, according as he is true to the light of his own torch. The preacher then is not an outsider nor an intruder, but entirely at home; and is educated or not according to the College or University where he obtained his orders.

But how about the temple? We discover that when we recognize the preacher, sometimes it is a horrible little shrine, vulgar, foul-smelling, worse than the most degraded Josh-house of the veritable idol worshiper; again it is domed with the blue arc of heaven, and frescoed with stars, its altar a snow-capped mountain, and its nave a green

and tufted Chamouni between the heights. Whatever it is, wherever, it is *environment*, nothing else.

We go from one temple to another, if we would but call them so, eternally. We dignify environment or not, in proportion as we listen to the preacher. He, the preacher, has an eloquent tongue; at times, in some, he is a true Demosthenes, or a thunder and lightning Zeus. He defies the roar of ocean, and holds the waves spell-bound by his volley of words. He speaks in a still small voice, or louder than the thunder-storm. He paints environment with the color of his eloquence, till a dungeon is patterned with glittering mosaics, and a hovel turned into a shrine of glittering gems. He undermines cities with his trumpet blast, and discovers the soil of Eden under their rotting pile.

If the preacher within you has something to feed upon, if you nourish him well, if you encourage him by your devotion, he will shine on environment with such

glamour and glow, that out of every ugly so-called reality, you will catch the glitter of the apparent illusion, and live in a fog-tinted splendor which will be utterly unaccountable to one who has stopped the mouth of the interpreter and plugged his own ears.

THE OPTIMIST.

The absolute certainty which the Optimist and Pessimist feel of their positions, gives some color to the probability that both are in a degree right. The Optimist sees the crescent, the Pessimist the veiled half of the moon, but neither grasps the complete orb. The Optimist ignores shadows and declares the inability of an object to cast one, or if he admits the shadow, he defines it as absorbed sunshine. He maintains that the Universe is the best that could possibly be and consequently perfect; that evil is only seeming, and sin an imagination. He repudiates disease and death, and declares that whatever *is,* is not only right, but delightful. He uses cant phrases glibly, and asserts that "all is well" a dozen times a

day. If you seek consolation from him in time of great sorrow, he smiles and declares that your trouble is in reality joy. If you consult him in sickness, he tells you that there is *nothing* the matter. He is sometimes comforting, but more often aggravating. His umbrella power of shedding afflictions, as one does a shower of rain, is in no way consoling to him who is less gifted.

The Optimist gets around unpleasantness by ignoring it; on no account will he look into the face of sorrow, but throws open the blinds that sunshine may flood the house of grief, while he paints the cheek of the corpse to simulate life. He is rich in expedients, and escapes quarrels, shocks and upheavals. He detests iconoclasts and truth seekers, who accept facts at all hazards. He despises a religion which includes in its vocabulary the words "Hell" and "Devil." He is excessively fond of cheerful poetry and flowers. He is constantly decorating graves, and shutting his eyes to *withered* roses. He has a power of deafness and blindness on oc-

casion that is amazing to one who sees the worm on the leaf; his spectacles (he is never without them) are many-tinted, one day a sea-green, another an azure, and again rose. He is utterly impervious to harsh sounds, but revels in music that has no minor strain; and discord, if there be any, resolves itself into harmony through his exultant interpretation. He is steeped in sweet odors, and inhales no breath but that of flowers. Altogether he is provokingly happy, and a great bore to one who now and then longs to enjoy his miseries.

There is nevertheless something shallow about the Optimist's rose-tinted bliss; it lacks the Rembrandt shading. There is no gloaming in his sky, and the sunshine misses its foil. A diamond glows in dim places, but the Optimist never glitters; he is a pale reflector, that seems to have but one side. There is nothing of the brilliant about him, but a deal of monotony. The rich variety called forth by an interplay of light and shade, is utterly out of the question in his case. The grand, the majestic,

the magnificent, the awful, *are not where he is.* He takes the fire out of lightning, and the resonance from thunder. He belittles the ocean in its unceasing plaint, and christens it a summer sea. He undignifies dignity, and touches grandeur with prettiness. The dim, arched cathedral with its mystic echoes, or the Minster of Nature with its nave twixt lofty pines, the mosque with its minaret and dome, its incense and mystery, are rarely dwarfed by the tread of his frisky feet. He prefers a cheerful church with plush carpets, an abundance of flowers, a choir of opera singers, and a preacher who dotes on sunshine.

The Optimist is, in a degree, a magician; he extracts the stings of bees and the fangs of snakes; he neutralizes poisons, and floods everything with a pale light, which though inane, is restful to tired nerves. It is pleasant to meet him, when you are drunk with the grandeur of the Matterhorn, and long for something homely and simple. Overwhelmed with the awfulness of a shadowy gorge, which like a gigantic

grave threatens to engulf you, dazed with the intoxication of the precipice till you cover your eyes, how welcome this mild angel with his cup of sage tea and prattle! He fondles the Alpine edelweiss and calls it pretty names, helping you to find your balance again; indicating by his very presence that some things are small. Or if he happens to be by, when you hang, as if for dear life on the words of an orator, one whose lightning eloquence transfixes you, he brings you down surely and swiftly from the danger climax of genius, where you must otherwise swoon from sheer ecstacy, with the remark that, "it is clever, it is sweet."

Yes, he is *restful,* he saves us from our Poes, our Napoleons, and ourselves. Though aggravating at times he is more often soothing, yet he has no hashish glamour about him, nor a veiled De Quincy power of bestowing visions, nor is he altogether common; he smiles too often to be one of the vulgar crowd. But his eyes, alas! have the look of the infant's before it

has acquired the power of shedding tears. His dry-eyed smiles stupify those who look on the majesty of nature, through the fog-mist of their souls.

The Optimist is but half natural; there is a queer affectation about him; he is a story without a sequel, a brook without a source, sunshine without a sun, light without heat. His teeth are white, but he has no lines nor dimples, and the muscular play about his mouth, at times has a ghastly look, a dead smile, as though it were forced on the lips of a corpse by galvanic persuasion. And his laugh has a peculiar ring, a metallic clatter, hollow and strange. His happiness is so persistent, that one detects a false note in it, or a repetition of the theme that smacks of untruth. Of this he is all unconscious; nor does he realize that there is a strain of cowardness in him, that impels him to an eternal ignoring of two sided facts, or inspires him to bury his head, child-fashion at night, beneath the blankets, when the wind howls. He flatters himself that he distills bliss, as

the perfumer distills rose attar, and steeped in self-satisfaction, he certainly does exude something, which has an unendurable comfort in it that is difficult to define.

We must put up with him as the world goes to balance the Pessimist. Though he has no touch of grandeur in him, he is tolerated and essential. If he soothes you into weariness, sleep may follow and nerve-calming dreams. Scowl on him then, he will never mind, and if he serves no other purpose than that of allowing you the opportunity to give *free* vent to yourself, he has not lived in vain as far as you are concerned.

THE PESSIMIST.

The gloomy grandeur of a great Pessimist is like the twilight of the Canyon of the Colorado; there the fishes float around without eyes; and you, at the feet of a Schopenhauer, lose entirely the power to see. The glance of the Pessimist withers the lilies, and causes the lips of children to quiver, when he walks their way. A woman of the timid sort, trembles in his presence, but adores him; he is fatal to her, yet she loves him to the death. He reads earth from its crust to igneous rock, and discovers the fire at her breast that must inevitably go out or rend her to pieces. He beholds the Universe returning by slow stages to the goal of *"nothing,"* or back to that Unit Will, that plays with

the stars, as though they were gilded balls. He reads the meaningless meaning of the Sphinx, and discovers the sure decay attendant upon organized life, and its ultimate return, in a cycle's whirl, back to the All from whence it came. He sees the specie vanish in the genus, and the particular in the whole. A sublime monist, he merges the individual into the race, and the race into the One. To him, the eternal struggle to *become,* results in naught of being; and Life, purposeless, hungry, and starved, swallows and digests itself.

There is a gloomy splendor in the Pessimist; he is vast and far-reaching; he digs down to the root of things, and discovers the filth and the worm; he burrows about the foundations of palaces like an eyeless mole, and learns their rottenness by the sense of touch; he views all air castle-dungeons, where phantom skeletons of murdered ghosts lie, with sarcastic smiles on his lips. He marches down the aisle of time with swift strides, never pausing till he reaches the end of the dim perspective, where the

ruins of a Babylon or a Thebes lie spread, shouting back from behind a temple of some defunct Memnon, his voice an echo among the tombs, the story of the rise and fall of Nations; while faintly in the wake of his hollow tones, come the cry of the bittern and the hoot of the owl. He would prove progress a dream, and aspiration a chimera; he would steep you in the bitterness of yourself, and force you to drink the decoction. Never stale, he is pungent, terrible. On the stage, he plays tragedy. He writes his novels with red ink, and veils the moral in the habiliments of death. His tread is martial; he fights sublimely—hand to hand. As Esculapius, he uncovers fœtid sores, and lays bare ulcers. As Realist, he opens the shutters of brothels, and floods the den of prostitution with the glare of day. He paints nude pictures, and decorates the halls of art with copies of "Things as they are." He chemically analyzes the underground sewers of the world's Paris, and shrinks not a whit from the foul breath of the cesspool. He is afraid of nothing; he

dares the heights, the depths. In his very blasphemy of courage, he chases Sirius over the sky with his spectrum, and invades the sacred secrets of man's interior with his x-ray. His speech is clear-cut sarcasm, or mournful monologue, more depressing than the hymns of our ancestors. He is grim, grim.

But if our Pessimist happens to be a man of small caliber, note the difference. Indeed we should have placed him first in our essay, as the little ought, in point of picture, to precede the great. Even *he* awes his wife, because of her love of peace. He complains, complains, complains; no matter what she or the household do, he is finical, severe. He sees ruin in the air; it takes the form of a bat or an owl, and slips in through the cracks of the half-open door. His prophecy is a croak, and he reads in invisible letters of fire, doom—doom—dcom. Sickness is at one elbow, death at the other; financial ruin is running ahead, total annihilation chasing behind; and all this, while he sits in his easy chair, smokes his pipe,

pats a fat pocket, and cultivates a bank book; all this, with his wife's kiss soft on his lips, and his children climbing up his knees.

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The Pessimist is by nature (though perhaps unconsciously) iconoclastic, chaotic; in reality he loves to upset and upheave; he is a storm fiend, delighting in the tornado and hurricane. He glories in fire, in war; if it fail him literally, he invents it, and revels in an imaginary cyclone, with its attendant destruction. He interprets all things to his liking, and reads his book of Revelation in a cave.

His mission is evident; he saves the world from the Optimist, and redeems the commonest thing from its ignominy. Instead of soothing, he excites; and all who come within his atmosphere are more or less stirred. He carries a chip on his shoulder, and is ever in readiness for a knock-down fight. He loves argument more than aught else, and hates whoever fails to resist; nothing outrages him as

does the acquiescence of others in his eternal complaints. His one chance of defending his position lies in an opposing obstacle, and that failing him, he is undone. To please him, you must fight him tooth and nail; would you offend him, shut your lips; the more silent you become, the more enraged he grows—he beats the air, he fumes—only an Optimist can control him. In fact they are true mates, for the Optimist effectually closes the Pessimist's mouth, and allows him no vent for the sulphuric lava of his seething soul.

HOW MEN ARGUE.

The world seems to be divided into two parties on this subject of Optimism and Pessimism, and one half wrangles with the other, as though it were aiming to cut the habitable globe in two. But the philosopher? Does he deny the right of either or of both? Does he preach a mezzo condition, where vice is merged into virtue, and black into white? Does he live in a dim gray fog, neither warm nor cold? Does he count on the dawn and the gloaming, and sleep through day and night? Are his food and drink luke warm, and his words bitter sweet?

Here let us state, that though the Sage understands and often rests on the balance of the golden mean, he in no way avoids the experience which implies the limit of ex-

tremes. The philosopher is neither Optimist nor Pessimist, he is both; or rather a third quantity in Nature, which takes into account the two sides of a thing or question at the same time. He sees the shadow under the tree and the sun overhead with one sweep of his eye; he accepts darkness and light as necessary constituents of the same thing, and transcending their marriage, he revels in both in consciousness at once. He is Janus-faced, and while he looks East he gazes West; when his eyes weep, his lips smile. He reads the record of Earth in her rocks and ribs; he was on hand at her birth, and will be in at her death. He too, like the Pessimist, runs down the æons, but laughs like the Optimist at the cry of the bittern; he sees the end from the beginning, and the beginning from the end. He believes in the Resurrection, and knows that a new Ninevah will spring from the rotting arms of the old. He, too, watches the going out of the stars, and the coming in; but sees the shadow of the moon in the lap of the crescent.

Death stalks at his left side, Life at his right, and he holds them both by the hand; he relates them, and in relating, transcends and comprehends them. He bends the straight line to a circle, and shifts the poles at will.

The philosopher knows full well that the Optimist is right, that the Pessimist is right—the chameleon may be red to-day and green to-morrow. The philosopher believes in the rythm, which mystifies the Optimist, and deludes the Pessimist; he realizes that the points of view are many, and that each position is true to its landscape. He understands that the Optimist is near-sighted, and that to him, distant things are blurred, while the Pessimist is too far-sighted to catch the meaning of the near. In fact the world's Optimists and Pessimists are nothing to one who sweeps the whole landscape with unerring eyes, while he pulls the past from the depths, and the future from the heights, *merging* cause and effect together, and reading them as two pages of the same book.

THE POET.

When the Singer sings, Nature holds her breath, Venus trembling, flees in tumult with her Doves and Graces, and Space is echoless of all save the poet's voice. Over the ocean it floats, clarion, ringing, high above the music of the deep, whose sub-tones chime with it, and mingle, like the muffled bass of a mighty organ. Rushing with the tempest, ever liquid, ever strong, it rises and falls with the passion of the storm; yet thrills through, around, above it, like the cry eternal of a raptured soul. It re-echoes mid the mountains, back and forth among the peaks, complaining, sighing, dying—lost in the caverns to come forth upon the heights, humming, wailing, whistling where the pines, shivering, listen, dumb and awed by the splendor of the strain.

The poet drowns the melody of the sky-lark in a rain of pure notes, and silences the

nightingale by the matchless music of his trill. He pipes where brooks wander, and Pan entranced, forgets to play, merging himself in the strange rapture, which holds more of beauty than his weird fancy ever conjured.

The poet comes to earth rarely; his rythmic return is heralded by the minstrel and the seer; Lesbos pants with joy when Sappho opens her eyes, and the harp is hung on the dead-tree limb when the "Tenth Muse" passes.

To wake to the poet is to rise to the god, for his song is immortal, and escaping the singer, it vies with time in its eternal race, Like that of the comet, the poet's orbit is unaccountable. Coming from an unreckoned distance, he illuminates heaven, and vanishes to startle and enamour the unseen watchers of another sky. The poet brightens the sun, gilds the star, crowns the mountain, crests the wave. He flashes on a country, to renew its vestal fires, then wings his way far off and out of sight into the dim and endless blue.

RELIGION.

To study man without his religion, is to do superficial work. Even in the dawn, farther back than written history, we find evidence that relates him to a Cuvier and an Agassiz, and separates him from the ape or hyena. When his head was different from ours, even then (possibly before the great glacier had appeared from the North) he had become conscious of *something* or *some one*, superior to himself, to which or whom he must necessarily do honor.

If animals have a religion, they give no evidence, unless those conquered by man look up to him as a god. But the wild beast, untamed, the king lion, the royal tiger, undoubtedly admit no superior, and feel in themselves an almightiness which death

alone can humble. But the cave man, the drift man, walked in a way, with God. Right here let us say, that the word God is elastic, and means something different to each human being, to say nothing of its interpretation by those who terrorized or fraternized with the mammoth and the mastodon. These prehistoric individuals, as their relics indicate, came up against something which astounded them; they discovered the wall of adamant, which was as non-understandable as is Spencer's Unknowable. To picture it another way, they found themselves afloat on a shoreless sea, and asked, but half consciously, "whence and whither."

It makes no difference whether your skull is twenty inches around, or twenty-four, whether you dress in skins, use stone implements and dwell in a cave, or stride about in broadcloth, carry a revolver and live in a castle; you are *bound* to be BOUND by the non-understandable, which masters you by its mystery, and consequently forces you to *religion.* And by religion we mean that worship of a something or some one

which is greater than yourself, and beyond your comprehension; that which compels you to acquiesce whether you will or not; that which vetoes absolute individual liberty, and binds and confines you in spite of all protestation. Though you blaspheme and curse, struggle and defy, *within,* you do homage to the Inevitable, and kneel at its shrine; though you set fire to the church and slaughter the devotee, though you foul the air with jeers, and shake your fist at the Almighty, *within* you have a little god, contracted, despicable, but nevertheless there, to whom you offer sacrifice. Or putting it more mildly, as an Atheist you may call your religion Agnosticism, Pantheism, Nature Worship, Animism, it is still a finality, a Sphinx, to which you yield obeisance, and by which you admit yourself mastered. Or putting it still more mildly, as a Theist you may call your religion Polytheism, Monotheism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Christianity, you sit under the wings of a great non-understandable bird which broods over and shelters

you, whose hovering pinions are never lifted, but as ultimate verities, dominate and o'ershadow you. There is no escape, from the drift-man to the Pope, we find like conditions. The human creature comes plump up against something from which he bounds back like an india rubber ball; the heavier he is, the more he feels the blow; a feather, he scarcely flutters; a cannon ball, he is all but shattered.

But here comes the peculiarity; the Atheist, whose religion is Agnosticism, scoffs loudly at the Theist, whose religion is Monotheism, whereupon the Theist catches the Atheist and burns him alive. The battle of religions began with the dawn, when Eozoic man emerged from his brute father, and is still furious, though fought by the kid-glove gentry at high noon. There is no fight about the ultimate Unknown, but what that ultimate is, is the question; whether anthropomorphic or inherent, exterior or interior, a being, a force, or principle. All men are religious, and, though they deny it strenuously, you can find no one on this

broad earth who has come to the realization that he is man, who does not concede that force and motion (if nothing else) are emphatic, to that degree that plants grow, and worlds spin, and are altogether too much for him, as he discovers within no power by which to put a stop to the same. This unknowable faces the acutest logician, or the most blasphemous heretic, and under its mask of a million faces, defies them both.

So then, we all have religion; that is to say, we are all bound by something beyond us, which, whether it be a reptile or a principle, *compels us to kneel.* That there is a difference in the beauty and dignity of religions, there is no denying; that they are a sure index to man's intellectual development, is absolutely certain. Like humanity's God, religion takes innumerable forms, yet in one particular manifests to all the same characteristic, which is that of being mysterious, unknowable—a conquerer by its very invincibility. The shade of a dead ancestor may be amply sufficient to excite the admiration and awe of an ignorant Mongol-

ian, while naught but invincible law can, in any way, call up reverence in the mind of a modern physicist. The parallel lies in the fact that reverence and submission are excited, and that reverence and submission are the same wherever found. *What stimulates* these qualities is not the question, but the qualities themselves are the all important. According to our definition of religion, all men are religious. There may be "Ten *Great* Religions," but there are countless others that are small, and finally descending from their parents, the Atheistic and Theistic, passing through innumerable divisions and subdivisions, we arrive at individual man, and observe that each has set up within his own breast his peculiar idol, which is in no way identical with that in any other, save in its power to excite adoration, and compel submission.

Thus far we have dealt only with religion as it manifests in the soul, but as the ideal ever seeks to perpetuate itself in some outer expression, we can partially get at the inner idol by the external. We have boldly

stated that all men have religion; we now dare to assert that all men are idol-worshipers. This will need no argument as regards the great religions, with their manifold expressions, but it may be somewhat difficult to convince you that a Spencer or a Huxley *also* sit at the feet of an inner god, which in spite of themselves takes expression.

The idol of primitive man was a terrific affair. If it were a ghost only, it was so fearful and alarming that it seemed ever necessary to propitiate it with offerings of flesh and blood. It was believed that this wandering, ostracized ancestor was aggrieved and dissatisfied with his position in the Universe; that death had done him a great wrong and consequently he was more or less malignant and jealous. A dread of being haunted by the phantoms of ages, that had acquired mysterious and revolting powers, caused those still alive and fortunate, to eternally grovel at these unseen feet, which might, if outraged, tread upon them at any moment. This ghost-idol was a veritable

entity in the soul of primitive man, and alas! even to this day, dominates a far greater number of humans than the world is aware of.

Ascending a step higher on the ladder of religion, we discover animal and symbol worship. In the first case, the idol is already provided; it may be a terrible python, a sacred cow, or even a cat. It is a ready-made *something,* which allows of a great saving in marble and bronze. Or if it is sculptured, the live specimens receive also their due share of applause and libation.

No "Heathen" (and we use the term reverently) worthy of the name, for an instant believes that his bronze Buddha or his stone image of whatever title, amounts to anything in itself, except as a reminder of some principle or force, which might be forgotten otherwise. The Buddha appears in many aspects, symbolizing different emotions by attitude and expression, crude to be sure, yet subtle to those who understand, bringing man to a consciousness of his limitation in self, by its very suggestiveness.

"The wicked Orient," to which country we of the Occident send missionaries, is gemmed or marred by these marvels or monstrosities, according as the case may be; while temples ranging from a pearl mosque, or the tomb-splendor of a Taj Mehal, to the humble Indian Pagoda, cover and protect countless other idols, smaller but as beneficent or malignant as they.

In our self-satisfaction, we of the West call these people heathen, and ourselves—well, what? You answer, "Christians;" but let us see. All over "civilized" Europe we discover cathedrals whose splendor rivals the East; we catch a glimpse of the ponderous dome of St. Peters, and the spires of Milan, or farther North the dim nave of the York, or the outline of St. Paul. In an humbler way, rises the church spire of America, or the barn-like extensiveness of a people's tabernacle. Shrines! shrines! nothing more nor less, sheltering, protecting, something—a statue of the Virgin, a Christ on the cross, a picture, or a Bible; as surely as the temple rises, the

fetich is inside, which calls for, aye *demands satisfaction.* Or if an anchoret or a poet seek the Temple of Nature, whose dome is more lofty than St. Peter's, whose aisles outdo the naves of Peterborough, his goddess takes form in guise of a divine being whom he sexes, fears and adores. Or, here we tread on dangerous ground, if we follow the man of science, stripped as he says of superstition, uninfluenced by revelation save that of Truth, fearless of the anathema of the priest, indifferent to a Hell or a Heaven, self-annihilated in *facts,* one who can neither be bribed nor scared, we shall find ourselves in the halls of learning and shall listen to his wranglings over that *unknown x,* which he is obliged to posit, ere he can get the first idea of an hypothesis, to say *nothing* of a premise. And this queer symbol, the *x* itself, is the Almighty Non-Understandable, which chills the blood in his veins; it is so tiny in appearance, and requires such a little altar, that it swells to immensity in meaning, and may have a damning property that

shall put its shivering devotee out of existence. It is a speck of combustible, that is liable at any minute to blow its worshipers up. Altogether this bit of an x (which requires in the making two strokes of a pen) , in despicable body, is the most powerful Deity on earth; and is as much an objective god as is a bronze Amidabutsa, or a vision of Truth conjured by the imagination. It is outside of pure Ego, and implies an object and subject, an observer and something observed; no matter to what fineness you shave your abstraction, it takes form in figures and words if in nothing else, and is only thinkable as it, in a degree objectivates into interior or exterior statue or symbol. The Physicist, then, is the most religious man on earth; he worships unceasingly and everywhere; he carries his god in his brain in the form of x, and shrines it in the temple of himself. The boundary of his empire expands each day of his life, unless he be supremely orthodox, when alas! he has perchance planted a hedge which he finds it hard to

scale; for there are men of science whose ideas are as narrow as the way to heaven. Science in its fullness is inclusive as well as exclusive, and embraces highways and byways as well as straight roads.

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The religion of a Hottentot or an Englishman is by its nature sacred; whatever really *is* a man's religion, if by it he is bound, inspired, awed and humbled, is highest and holiest, and dominates all else. Here we make another bold statement; each man's religion is, in a sense, true, whether it be phallic-worship or adoration of a Supreme Being; by this we mean that, tearing away the tinsel and the false, the center, the core of each man's religion (not his hypocrisy but his religion) is *true.* In the first place, you will find no self-conscious being who does not fear, and *consequently* adore something. A cur will lick the hand of the master that strikes him, and the wickedest wretch in the Universe will cringe before, and therefore worship, some awe-inspiring, unknown thing, hav-

ing for that vile god, exactly the same sentiment as the devotee has for the Virgin.

Each human being feels within him the same emotion, and has, as far as the emotion goes, the *same* truth. Love is love, wherever it strikes, be the object or subject vile, it matters not. Love is love, hate is hate, fear is fear, adoration is adoration; its quantity may vary in individuals, but its quality never. So then all religions have in them an *element of truth.*

Remember we base all these startling and positive statements upon *our* definition of religion. Here please note the difference between our position and that, say, of the ardent Catholic; he will assert to you that *the church,* meaning the *only* church, has the *one* real religion, and that there *is* none other. In the face of this assumption, the Protestant will declare emphatically that his people have found the right way; that there is but one path, and it is traveled by all the honest Protestants of Christendom. Upon this, Luther fights

the Pope, the Pope excommunicates Luther, and each damns the other to a hell blazing with fire and brimstone.

But behold a second anomaly; these "absolutely right" Protestants, break up into sects innumerable, battle among themselves, oft-times to the death, and show to the whole world the paradox of fallible infallibility, which puzzles it even to this day.

On earth, the famed Prince Sidartha has a larger following than any other of the sublime Masters of religious thought, and yet, alas! the Tripitika is interpreted to please the sect that reads; each one positive of correct rendering, and challenging the other to a disproval of the same.

In the realms of science and art, there are conservative schools which will brook no assertion on the part of others that their platform can in any way be shaken. Against this "I am all right and you are all wrong" idea, we bitterly protest; whatever of truth there is in a man's cult, is belittled and degraded the moment he takes this ground. Do not mistake us, we have

no objection to the iconoclast, he is necessary and cleansing; we would above everything be iconoclastic ourselves, but we dig away the rubbish to discover the gem, not for the purpose of betraying a vacuum. We strike at error, that we may uncover truth; not to show to the world that *we,* of all others, have reached the mountain peak, which, by the way, is too small for any save ourselves. Never attack a man's religion; aim at his hypocricies, his shams, his "dressed-up" idols; but the *real thing*—let it alone; it is as sacred as your own, and as *unassailable.*

There are signs in the air of better days. Long since, in most countries, have the cruelties of the cross and the stake been abolished. Witches are no more tortured nor hung, and the lights of generosity and liberty are beginning to beam on the brows of men. An unusual thing happened a few years since; representatives of all the great religions on earth met in parliament, clasped hands and sat side by side. There was a calmness and benignity manifested by them

which a century ago would have been impossible; there were no defiant glances and but few sarcasms; there seemed among them a spirit of tolerance, and a willingness to listen to all sides of the argument, far removed from that of an earlier epoch. It was as though for the first time in history, the representatives of all creeds and cults saw swinging in the sunlight a huge brilliant called religion, which, as it swayed, flashed a myriad tints, each more dazzling than the other, yet blending and melting in one white glow. On this great magnet the Parsee fixed his glance, and, hypnotized, gazed on; the Brahman, Buddhist, Jain, Confucianist stared and stared entranced. The Christian defied its glitter, all its sects were raptured, and discovered in this immense reflector, the wondrous gleam of their Master's eyes. If, perchance, there sat among them one who gave allegiance to naught save abstract truth, even he, held spellbound by the x of his enigma, *even he,* felt the unknowm abstraction expanding far

beyond his mental grasp into the dim inscrutible Divine.

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To synthesize religions is to find the common property belonging to each, and he who unveils idols, elucidates creeds, and tears out the hearts of bibles, is the greatest Master of them all.

THE ILLUMINATI.

You will notice, if you scan the sky on a clear night, that stars of the first magnitude are comparatively few, while those of a lesser order gem all heaven. When the Dog Star catches your glance, and hypnotizes you into seeing naught but itself, the specks of gold dust with which the blue is powdered, melt and flow into it, till grown to an enormous sun, it envelops and enthralls you.

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We read of the Illuminati, and we close the book and wonder. Are they the baptized who carry the tapers, or mystics concealed in hollow rocks; are they among us or far off? Are they perfect, or endowed

with supernatural powers? Having wondered long, we appeal to reason, and answer our own questions.

To be illuminated, must necessarily mean to be flooded with light, either in the intellectual or spiritual sense—to have superior *wisdom* and *insight* because of *fire.* This fire, whether within or without, casts a glow over things, where the enlightened walk, and transforms, by its gleaming, all upon whom it flashes, as does the sun. Here we pause, and wonder again. To say that this *must* be, if there are Illuminati, is not to prove their existence. We might posit a fiery rose, a veritable incendiary, that throws sparks and sets aflame a whole garden. But is there such a rose?

We cease wondering and search for data; one datum is enough, *only one.* Let a botanist produce such a blossom, in a flower pot, or on a garden bush, allow us to examine and watch it, and though there is no other on earth, we have our proof that such a rose can be.

The Illuminati!! We search for data,

one datum. We eliminate at the start, all imaginary beings of whom other people have dreamed, also all those who claim enlightenment and bring no proof. Assertion amounts to nothing in this investigation; we get rid of all legend and myth; we care naught for the laying on of hands, nor unctious experiences. We search the broad earth over for proof, in the form of something left behind by these Beings called Illuminati, or for the sacred One himself in person, who, like the Dog Star, can illuminate and enthrall us. We are willing to take as evidence either himself, or the work that he is doing or has done. It is not necessary that we raid the den of an author, if we *hold his book in our hand;* the picture of an artist is his verification; the statue of a Phryne proves the existence of Praxitiles, or some one else thus labeled. That Socrates is lost in Plato, and Plato merged in Socrates is immaterial, when the "Apology" lies open upon our desk; whether there were two Sapphos or one, is out of the question, while the "Hymn to Aphrodite"

thrills the nerves of man. The Immortals! Their works *compel* us; and uncovering our heads to the Illuminati, we quiver with strange rapture, and like the moon, catch and throw off fire.

But please notice, by this severe method of getting rid of all unknown quantities, and dealing only with the known, we have simply ascertained that the Illuminati are possible; of this we have the best of evidence. Every work of genius, that which endures the onslaught of time, and appeals to man as complete and perfect, is evidence supreme. And more, even now, before your eyes, creations are evolving which are destined to *live;* principles are embodied, and Ideals realized. All this overwhelms us with the consciousness that the Illuminati are with us even to this day. Our conception of the Iiluminati may not be entirely acceptable to those who believe in the supernatural, who hinge their faith upon miracle or something out of the order of things as we know them; those to whom transcendentalism means a defiance of laws, and a

working by a method, for the explanation of which, there is no language.

If there were bodies of men in Belgium, or anywhere, that answered to this description, we implore proof; we know that, if there were not one Jesus, at least there were those who conceived of the "Sermon on the Mount," for we have read it. If the story of Bhagavat is a myth, the "Three Baskets" are still teeming. Let us see if these far-famed Illuminati of the Mystics have left anything as verification of themselves. But wait, we must be more careful. Is there a flawless gem? Perfection, what does it mean? We can grasp but one definition. If all things are undergoing endless change by the law of Rythm, wherein lies perfection? Simply in this, that the highest tide means the ultimate as to aim; the thing, whatever it be, retreating, to rise again to another climax. A perfect rose is one which manifests in every particular the qualities of a rose; so with man, so with an angel. For a man to evolve an angel out of his decayed old age,

is not to be a perfect man. He passed the ultimate of the human in his prime, but rises toward the acme of the angelic from his valley of dry bones. The Ideal once captured, we seek another, and reach perfection again in that when found. Excuse this digression; we return to the Illuminati.

If this mysterious body of men in Belgium, or Thibet, are lauded as supernatural, we must assert, that we in all our search for data, have found no evidence which transcends law, as we understand it; and up to date, we repudiate them. If, on the contrary, these bands of brothers have left behind effects that are destined to endure, because of *their grasp upon and understanding of Law,* we admit their worthiness of the title, on account of their great wisdon, and power to impart the same. That a certain amount of occult lore has been preserved, somewhere, prudently parcelled out on occasion, is indisputable. (By occult lore, we mean that

not generally known.) To have occult lore at one's command, to have discovered laws and facts beyond the ken of humanity at large, and to give out as one sees fit, is to be a sort of Japanese Mikado of ancient times, upon whose face man dared not look, who, nevertheless, through his shrewd and too powerful Shogun dispensed wisdom and justice ad libitum.

That there have been such men, that there are such men, the data demonstrate. Is there a flawless gem? In the sense that it answers the demand of the eye, *yes;* under the microscope, *no.* But we seldom extend our vision with a brass tube; our eyes are adapted to the world, and the world to them. In this sense, there is much that is perfect. Our Illuminati, whether visible or concealed, *create* and *perpetuate* by that tremendous soul energy, whose constituent is *fire.* Should you catch the eye of one enlightened, or stand dazed before the work of him, he would so heat and inflame you, that your

dreaming soul must needs wake. Like the great gourmand, Sirius, who swallows the stars, he in his greed, would devour every other luminary, and become to you an insatiate sun, covering all heaven.

ALONE.

Utterly, without a friend. On foreign soil, in the shade of a ruin; you discourse to yourself, no one understands you, for you speak in a strange tongue; you frighten people with your tears, and living things shrink from you. How you came here is a mystery; whither you are going, you know not; for once in your life you stand isolate; the trees shrink from you, and the sun draws its veil; even the air smothers you—nothing is yours. This is not hell, nor an ice palace of frozen self, but that terrible nostalgia whose clutch is worse than death. And yet you came here by slow degrees, leaving one thing loved after another; the last face smiled on you long ago, then the last flower; now

you find yourself in a *strange* place, *utterly* strange; your heart has gone out of you, you no longer hear it beat. You sit down upon a stone, 'tis hard; it resents you; even the clothes that you wear seem peculiar; and your unfamiliar hands wring each other.

What are you? Who are you? How have you lost yourself? You pull up memories, as from a fathomless well—strange faces look in your eyes and escape you, after dropping tears, one after another, all dropping tears. You draw on the future, and see visions of dead worlds, and a bottomless deep, and a mountain where you sit, solitary. You can no more *think,* you are too sad; you touch nothing with brain or heart. If only something, a grain of sand, a speck of dust, *something,* would come to you; if the wind would but blow it at you. Alas! unseen hands scoop the very earth beneath your feet, as if your mother were digging your grave; and the wind struggles to tear off your garments and your mantling hair. Nature would de-

molish and annihilate you in herself, or roll the spinning earth from beneath you, leaving you bodiless, a naked soul, palpitating in space. Is it your fault? You imagine so; you *have wandered* away. You know that you were a long time getting here, that you might have gone back; but now you are lost, the old world has vanished, the new is a tomb. You put your arms longingly around the ruined column, it gives no response; you lean your cheek against it, it kisses the ivy, but not you; and then, your tears all shed, you pray, and implore Death to strike you, lest you take your own life; but he, even *he* despises you as too cheap a victim. How awake, how alive you are in your own company! The terrible realization of *self* is upon you; the potential energies of a new world are waking while those of the old are falling asleep.

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Man who dares to wander in realms not trod by his ancestors, who explores intellectual and moral jungles, who strays away from home, far, far, till he loses the

road back, must pass through that *awful* hour, when on the edge of the old, and the brink of the unexplored, naked, desolate, he finds himself *alone*. Not a soul would come with him, not one loved him enough to follow; and he (it was his own fault) has no choice but to advance. It might have been curiosity, it does not matter; whatever it was, it has beckoned him, and he has followed. To be sure, he has done with the past; he knows it now; he has worn it out; and yet it was dear; his ancestors' thoughts, his mother's lectures, his father's homilies, all have been born and bred in him.

The Unknown holds something undoubtedly rich, splendid. He is well aware that the GREAT pass through the wilderness—it is the portal to a kingdom. But in spite of it all, *he is alone.*

We offer him no consolation; the *Inevitable justifies itself.* Yet, somehow as the moon comes up and turns him to marble, at that look in his eyes, half desperation, half despair, we are undone, and sadly turn our steps another way.

YOU.

You say to yourself that the day must arrive when you can fold your hands and be happy; your work finished, everything complete, you will sit down and enjoy the result. You are running a race, and when the goal is reached, you will rest in a sort of trance ecstacy, till time shall end. You understand life to be a probation, or rather a preparation for SITTING STILL. A prolonged idleness seems to you, in your present comprehension of things, to be the ultimate of living—an aim worthy the struggle, a result worth the price.

Perhaps you are young; if so, you have doubtless set apart a certain number of years for this, and another for that; you have planned every step of your way to *nowhere*

with the ingenuity and anxiety of one seeking the magnetic pole; you will work the best part of your life for *nothing,* as ardently as though the gold of an Ophir were awaiting you, or a trip to Mars. Hoping for at least the allotted three score years and ten as your term of life, you expect to exhaust fifty of them in labor, and twenty in sitting down. You are constantly telling your friends that you are getting *ready* for something, that you expect the time will come when you can take life easy, that you are progressing where you can see your way ahead, etc. If your friend really pinned you to your statement, and demanded your meaning, you would be unable to answer; you have a vague idea that you are going to school, and that the vacation is a certainty in the far future. In fact that word, Future, acts upon you like magic; no other sets your blood bounding in the same way. If a thing is far off, it takes on the enchantment of distance. You carry a spyglass in your pocket, and spend long hours looking at it. It is like a speck of a boat out at sea, very much

akin to a cloud, which you expect to sail on nevertheless. Your life is all a great by and by, vague and hazy, but so overcharged with bliss that your energy is constantly sapped in the anxiety of waiting for it. You wonder sometimes why other people, old folks, are not enjoying what you feel certain that you will. They have reached the age of realization, their time of work has passed, they have wealth and leisure, and alas, senility. You console yourself that it is not the fault of the method, the *idea,* but of them. You talk with one, an old man; he will tell you that his reward is in *heaven,* that on the other side every kind of bliss awaits him, that he is lying upon the door-step of the temple, which he will enter to-morrow, where there is rapture eternal; that in heaven there is no night, but a splendor of sun, and golden streets past understanding; that he has but to die to arrive at it all; he is "only waiting."

And this is the refrain that you sing also; *waiting! waiting!* for what? To-morrow, which will be another to-day; perchance

better, perchance worse, but another to-day. Some one, which will be another entity, perhaps better, perhaps worse, than the one with which you fraternize now, but another entity. A new country which will have its mountains and vales, its lakes and streams but slightly different from your native land. A new heaven with a similar sun to that which captured your gaze this morning, and a new earth, with an ocean and dry land not far different from that upon which you travel now. Or if you have rounded your three score years and ten, and found your road to have been the dead level of repetition, you delude yourself with the idea that "There is no road without some turning," and expect at the sharp corner of death to wake up in a flood tide of glory, born into heaven full grown.

You undoubtedly discover that there is still to your dreaming eyes a Future which veils itself, and allures you with the promise of a more distant portal and paradise, yet farther off and harder to reach. So you go on chasing the Future, which somehow you

can never catch. If perchance you lay hands on her, she slips through your fingers like an eel; she well knows that possession spoils the charm, that her hold on you lies in illusive, slippery attributes; she entices you through the valley and appears again far away on the mountain top; she throws you a kiss from the edge of the precipice, and peeps out later from behind a far-away forest tree. She never does more than to throw kisses; her lips touch no man's, they are sacred. You are dying for love of her, dying by inches, and she knows it. She watches you as you fade, her eyes radiant with happiness. "One more victim," she says, "one more." She is the Queen of a heaven peopled with beings, ever restless with insatiate passion for herself—the Isis-veiled future. There is no calm in this place, no peace. Her's are the only satisfied eyes; all others are filled with longing, longing for her.

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You are eternally asking, "What is the object of life, *my life?*" As if life, like

beauty, were not its own excuse. Life contains within itself its own object, which is *to be.* The seed holds its own motive, which is the stupendous one of the plant. Flora and fauna live in the *now,* but man, alas! toils and spins. In Eden he went naked, and under the green boughs looked between branches at the divine blue of the sky, or listened when the Lord walked in the garden; but the poor mortal of to-day is racing after the Future, that is supposed to be flying back to her home in paradise, and he, so intent upon her, forgets to listen for the footsteps of the Lord.

You will never get there, never, for the Future will race on like the "Wandering Jew;" she is unceasingly going, and you, poor mortal, will stumble in the way. But should you stroll out some day into an Eden, near by, and sit under trees where the sunlight falls strongly, sifting its splinters between the leaves upon your head, and listen, forgetting to-morrow, ignoring yesterday, you might perchance hear the soft foot-fall of the Lord. The rosebush catches

it, and the lily, even the bee and the bird; and you, perhaps *you,* if you listen, will hear it, faintly but certainly—*the foot-fall of the Lord.*

"Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin." But perceive the anomaly; some few, imagine that they understand, and fold their hands idly, refusing to work. Alas! these few are more undone and godless than those who chase the chimera of the far-off. Mark you, the more you calculate, plan, and arrange for the Future, the wiser you are, but *live* in the *now.* Remember that this very calculating, this very mathematical problem of to-morrow, is the evolving that you are to enjoy *this moment.* To-morrow is nothing to you, except as you hold it with tight clutch on the lap of *to-day.* This mood of yours, which means this present hour (and we calculate time by states of mind), this mood of yours, is your *life,* your *now,* be it heaven or hell, it is yours, *you;* and though you forestall and trap the Future by a device of the present,

you are you, only as you grapple with the hour's mood—your environment's mood—for you and your environment are to all intents, one.

Farewell Future! Farewell Past! Wed them To-day, and they will respond to another name.

NATURE.

What the meaning of this word is, it would be hard to define—the generally understood meaning—for no two writers or thinkers speak of it in exactly the same way, or if they do, the scope for interpretation is so large, that it might admit of almost any rendering. To be sure, the dictionary gives a number of definitions, but to accept some of these would necessitate the positing of an anthropomorphic God, superior to and above Law; a Being outside of and opposed to Nature; one forever combating her; for Nature is spoken of as sexed.

If you consult Theology for a definition, you find that Nature (though perhaps it does not so state in plain words) is the

Devil, or closely related to the arch-fiend. You are warned from the beginning to beware of her machinations. The theologian speaks of the natural man as though he were already in the clutches of a Delilah. The spiritual man, on the contrary, is held up as the divine model; but as he is never either fully pictured or defined as distinct from the natural man, he resolves himself into a sort of vague mirage which one seeks in vain to imitate. Nature, according to theology, endows each new born child with an incentive to sin—originate sin—and nothing but an escape from her who thus damns him, will avail toward his salvation.

This may sound very well in a sermon, or appear plausible in print. But what does it mean? Our mother, for even the theologian calls her such, must necessarily be carrying on continual warfare with the author of our being, called by mankind God, and the originator of even herself. The man of science, if he be clear-cut and great, repudiates this idea, and looks upon Nature

with love and reverence; he considers it in all things—the nature of a thing is the law of it—he debates very little whether it is good or evil; it *is,* and that is sufficient. In watching plant life, he discovers that each individual species is distinctly selfish in its effort to be, protecting itself not only with means of defense, but with weapons of *destruction.* He furthermore finds that it adapts itself to environment, and changes to some extent its habits to fit new conditions. Its prime idea seems to be that of preserving its *individuality* as against all odds, having no sympathy nor altruistic tendencies toward plants of a different species, ignoring them altogether unless there can be between them a system of interchange, or service rendered back and forth.

In animal life we observe the same tendency. The nature of each organized creature is first and foremost to preserve itself and its offspring; and by itself, it means an entity which in its *own nature,* is different from every other. Nature would seem to mean the *individuality* of each living thing, or

going farther back, each inanimate thing also. In fact our mother nourishes *individuals;* she deals in variety, and abhors monotony. To synthesize the nature of things, to do and to be so and so, would be to imagine that abstract tendency to become individuals as opposed to that other attribute which inclines to uniformity. To be sure, we might again assert that the tendency to equalization is Nature also; yet as things are each different from the other, and striving for a unique expression, in order to distinguish one pole of being from the other, we call this Nature. The word Nature would not apply here unless there were *individuals;* contrast and difference alone reveal it. Unless individuality be a passing dream, Nature manifesting in variety is unerring and endless.

We then have a mother who is *in* us rather than without. She is determined that we shall express some phase of herself which no other of her children can manifest, and urges us on to that end. She glories in the multiplicity of her progeny; and their

continual struggle, the one with the other, is the source of unceasing amusement to her restless self. She is not in the least alarmed about the result, she knows that nothing of hers can be destroyed. The light put out is not the annihilation of fire. The figure rubbed off the slate is not its destruction in mind. So, determined that they all shall have a chance, she allows her offspring (or rather her myriad little selves) to have their fight out, one with the other, getting an immense amount of enjoyment from the unceasing strife.

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People speak of Nature as belonging to some things and not to others, using language so loosely that the words make lies of themselves for the deluding of mankind. For instance, one says, "Nature is never cruel, but man is;" as though man had escaped his mother, and stood aloof. If he flatters himself in this way, his conceit will be overthrown on the day, perhaps, when he comes to die. However there is one thing

certain, he can apparently cheat her through her own attributes. I say apparently, for in reality he does nothing of the sort. Our mother is lazy; she puts up with her child, if he expresses a *little* of her, and seems to be amazed and outraged if he attempts to do more, but secretly she is rejoiced and exhilerated. If mayhap you discover *her deeper intent* in regard to yourself, and attempt to realize it *in haste,* she will undoubtedly chastise you, but each blow will be followed by a kiss, and it will be such a precious thrashing, that you will wish to hold it in memory for the rest of you natural life.

Fear nothing then; allow your individuality as full an expression as other individuals will tolerate. It is only the half expressed individual that is vicious; he is the sour apple, the blasted bud; he murders and tortures others. You perhaps are a sinner because Nature has not had her way with you. You have disobeyed your mother, and behold yourself in the mirror of human eyes, a monstrosity, a dwarf. If you will

but remember that the Nature of you is not a thing apart, but yourself temporarily completed, which shall again evolve another expression of you as an individual, you will learn the meaning of the word variety, and awake to the consciousness of life.

THE UNEXPECTED.

The Orient prates a great deal about the Law of Cause and Effect, while in the Occident there is a phrase after this manner, "'T is the unexpected that always happens." We believe that there is no getting away from the East or the West; their maxims appear contradictory, but let us see. If we knew cause and causes, we could easily figure out effects. In fact the two would appear to our understanding side by side; but causes have a way of hiding themselves, while effects flaunt their handkerchiefs in our faces; they are imps that seem to be born out of nothing, in the country of nowhere. To be sure, the nests and dens of some of them are easily discovered, but the majority, like snakes and tigers, conceal their lairs. Causes are

fathered by causes, and the present results, which presume to please or insult us are metamorphosing before our very eyes, and becoming the parent of effects due to-morrow. The Occident comes in at this stage and sneeringly asserts that "It is the unexpected that always happens." If yesterday's cause were an effect of the day before, nevertheless, I have had it temporarily in my hand as a breeder, and I might have discovered what kind it would bring forth. So today was not necessarily pregnant with a great surprise, but of course I failed to watch; I was busy. A match was dropped, I forgot, and it lay where it fell. This morning my house burned over my head; I have no roof but the sky. It was quite *unexpected;* the cause was a *mouse and a match.*

It is not always possible nor convenient to trace events backward. In many cases some think that it is necessary and wise to look upon them as thunderbolts in clear heaven, miracles, or visitations of Providence. It is more comfortable to our so-called conscience, to relegate disaster and "good luck" to an

all-wise dispenser of rewards and punishments, than to discover ourselves, in a way, behind the apparent surprise. "As you sow, so shall you reap," is banded back and forth, yet each morning most of us awake, astonished, that things are as they are. No doubt that there are Units beside ourselves that have a hand in the mischief that befalls us. Perhaps, however, we might have, to some extent, worked out the combination, had we been alert, and though we could not have prevented the catastrophe, we should at least have escaped the shock.

Man goes on sowing to the Devil, and when His Majesty comes to gather him in, as part of the crop, he is amazed at the unexpected. He has cheated himself into the idea that he is an exception to the rule, that a draught of liquor remains in his stomach and lets his head alone; that a night's debauch resolves itself into a Don Juan refrain, which he can whistle away into uncertain echoes, as the years slip by; that an abuse of hospitality, that blackest of crimes, the desertion of friends, redounds to his good, by the

arrival of others from unlooked for quarters. He has steeped himself in these evil dreams, till his flavor is quite different from that of better men, and when the effect protrudes its head, new-born from the cause, he is dumb, and terrified with *surprise*. He had presumed that it was his special privilege to scowl right and left, that repartee and sarcasm were his exclusive right; and when he finds himself paid up in his own coin, he is astonished beyond measure. If he is inclined to cant phrases, he bemoans the dispensations of a Providence which selected him as an example of its mysterious dealings with mankind. His causality, which is keen about others, is utterly wanting in regard to himself; overwhelmed with the unexpected, he poses before the world as an example of human inconsistency.

The question resolves itself then into this: to what extent can men know cause, or to put it another way, to what degree must man be shocked, either pleasantly or otherwise, by the unexpected? It would seem that the more observant and rational

he grows, the more tentative his memory, the less liable is he to be taken by a surprise which shall throw him off his stable foundation, or upset his well-earned poise. A good General, whether on the field of attack or defensive, is phenomenally alert. He takes into account every probable or possible maneuver of the enemy. He sends scouts in all directions, and establishes a picket guard on every side. He watches keenly for ambuscades, he aids his eye with a field glass, and the ears of others with a trumpet. He is a general, in proportion as he can do this, and his work tells accordingly.

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That man is fittest to survive, who sees cause and effect as one; who goes backwards from the reason of yesterday's events to that of a cycle; who perceives the subtler as well as the more apparent causations. The seer and the poet are the masters of men. But even he who is most efficient in reading the book of the past, and writing that of the future, even he is the constant recipient of surprises. Were every cause

known, and every result exactly as we had calculated, were we omnipresent and omniscient, so correct that a mistake would be an impossibility, we should be deprived of the joy of life — the ever varying charm of the Unexpected — mystery would vanish, and with it the Veil of Isis.

It is only when the surprise is too sharp that it is a terror and a pain. A deluge of misfortunes, inundations of joy, bring shocks that kill. But the soft delight that thrills, from an unexpected kiss on the cheek, or the throb of sympathy from unlooked-for tears, are necessary to life's shadowy delight.

So then the Orient and the Occident are right. Cause and Effect is the Nemesis that chases us eternally, to spitefully shriek in our ears the maxim of "The Unexpected."

PRAYER.

All men pray. Some wear long robes and stand on the street-corners, others retire into their closets. Prayer is *longing, desire to have.* All men pray. But he of the broad phylacteries, loud voice and eloquent tongue, is perhaps speaking to be heard of men. Prayer is a cry, an *agonized* cry; it comes from the heart when one is alone. It is the abandon of self in longing, imploring. Rarely can one lose himself in entreaty when others are listening, rarely.

"Philosophy is ice," you say, "to whom, to what, shall we go when in great sorrow, great anxiety? Upon whose breast shall we pillow our heads, what heart will respond to us, what eyes?" Philosophy! You have but half grasped it,

if you find the touch cold. To *love* wisdom is to be philosophic, and love is of the *heart*. You may wrestle with ontology and feel nothing, for intellect is icy; but when the emotions warm to Truth, the pulse of Being beats fast. The wisdom-lover is on fire. The pseudo philosopher is a half-fledged bird; his wings are a burden; he were better as a quadruped, for now he can neither walk nor fly. Large brained, heartless, having no understanding of the opposite pole of his being, he is top-heavy and unreliable; weighted with thought, lacking buoyancy of feeling, he prays in a dumb uncertainty. His longing is like that of the dimly-conscious plant, that reaches out here and there for, it knows not what. There is a vague ache in the place where his heart ought to be, which he tries to think down. Yet the fire smolders even in him, faintly under the ashes.

All men pray. "If God is unrelenting law, why beseech him?" you ask. Ah! *Love is a law.* The Universal is about

you, within, without. Something there is for you—a boon; for the love of it, your magnetism draws, draws till it comes—the thing, the one, you have prayed for. It is an opposite to your own condition, for opposites attract. You are sorrowful, and you kneel; Joy arrives, smiling, and kisses you. One said, "The happy have no history;" we add, "The happy never pray." If you are poor and crave wealth, you kneel to the god Mammon and plead for gold; you are indigent, you beg for wealth, no poor man supplicates poverty. If you pray intensely, if your petition is *terrible,* the way will be shown you—the way to the mine. The poorer, the surer are you, for extremes meet. Those who long for wealth, pray hard. Are you sick, health is good, is in God, you demand it; you kneel to Hebe, youthful, blooming, sweet-smiling Hebe! If you care for her, if you pray in agony, she will hear, for she seeks her own. The blushing nurse who vivifies with her touch, strokes your aching brow, and you take up your bed and walk. This is not

idolatry; the Universal manifests in variety; Kistna has many expressions.

Do you *demand* a friend; he comes, he *must.* You force him to you by the energy of your prayer; the deserted take heaven by storm. But this is praying for *some thing.* There are others on their knees; hark! "Deliver us from temptation, desire." A condition of coolness and calm steals on one who prays that the fires of his being may be quenched. The flame of life riots and burns, his very soul is seared; the balance between intellect and heart is lost; in despair of himself he closes his eyes to shut out the light, and the blessing falls from the sun's arms—'t is the fog-chill, healing and salt.

The philosopher prays on his feet, as he moves, burning for Truth. Clear-headed to see, hot-hearted to feel, he alternates prayer with thought, wisdom with love.

Remember that there is everything in the All—a mint of gold, a pharmacy of medicine, a University of learning, a panorama of sights, a mother's bosom, a lover's heart.

Those who take but little from the Universe, and seem to pray much, have weak desires. Without divine unrest, self-satisfied, content, though they kneel three times a day and petition the Almighty on the Sabbath in the Sanctuary, in reality they pray seldom in their unhistoric lives. They are the hypocrites that worried Jesus. He called them "whited" sepulchers, and showered contempt upon their unworthy heads. It was not their lack, but their overmuch praying that excited his indignation. To be prayerless, is to be satisfied, without aspiration; this, though a misfortune, is nevertheless an honest condition. But the pretender at prayer, is another man. He formulates his sentences with precision, cant phrases flow from his lips to order, he kneels at stated periods on demand, his elocution is without flaw, his voice is trained and primed, his throat is cleared, the convenient glass of water is at hand, his *amen* is rich and well-rounded, and his listeners pronounce judgment. He receives money for the effort, and the Master, Jesus, quivers with wrath. But

even he—this white sepulcher—sometimes grovels in prayer. All men pray.

Dear one, "Let not your heart be troubled," pray. There is somewhere a bosom for your tired head; pray. To beg at the portal of God, is no disgrace. Ask naught from man, plead where the heart of the Universe beats, aye do more, *demand.* Stand erect, with open eyes, *reach out and take.* As you warm with prayer, your exordium, a petition, merges into your peroration, a *demand.*

The Master which philosophy evolves, lays hands on that which is his.

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA.

The word God, is but a term, and yet at the use of it, we uncover our heads. It is man's attempt at expressing something which he can not express, of conveying an idea which never can be conveyed.

We are not impressed by the name, for that implies good only; but to the awful Something which lies back of it, and means *Power,* the Beginning, the End, the Ultimate, we kneel.

To the Greeks, Zeus roared in thunder and flashed in lightning. Even now man realizes God in the cyclone and the tempest. All things sublime, irresistible, overwhelming are, to an ignorant mortal, God's means of manifestation. The awful love which He inspires is impregnated with fear. From the lowest specimens of humanity to the

highest, the same dread rapture thrills the nerves and stimulates the heart, at the thought of the Ultimate.

Ignorance makes of God one thing, Wisdom another; but whatever He or *It* seems to be, He stands to the worshipper as the arbiter of destiny, and a dread Reality which none can escape. A piercing, all-seeing eye seems to follow man to the uttermost parts of the earth; no cavern however dark, no pit however deep, effectually hides him from this penetrating, accusing glance; the light of it floods him in the tomb, and naked, he is seen as he really is, by one whom he calls God. Perchance it is a scaled and horned monster; but the deep orb has caught him; he is recognized, *marked, watched.* It may be the stolid glare of a wooden image, or a stone idol, *its gaze is on him.* This terrible eye grows keener in the dark, and draws and accuses its victim, till utterly servile, completely subdued, he brings sacrifices to blind, *or put it out.* Could man shut up the eye of God, for but a day, carnage would run riot, and earth would be

peopled with devils. As man expands and grows wiser, he discovers the secret of the thunder, and utilizes the lightning. His God becomes more and more mysterious and farther removed. He tears down the altar upon which his bronze image rests and locates a throne in far space, upon some ultimate star, brighter than Sirius, out of sight, where he places a Being as grand as his imagination can conjure, to which all constellations do homage in their ceaseless whirl toward the center of the Universe, where the Giver of Light dispenses its beneficent rays. To this sublime Entity, anthropomorphic, terrible, giving birth to sun-systems, sending comets as fiery messengers to the utmost verge of heaven with prophetic warnings, tossing meteors right and left as signs and signals, surrounded by cherubs and cherubim, seraphs and seraphim, angels and arch-angels, he kneels and prays.

But the astronomer sweeps the sky for the great white throne and finds it not. He predicts the return of the comet, and gets an inkling of the meaning of the meteor. He

catches the shooting-star in invisible hands, and picks it to pieces. He analyzes the chemicals of distant suns with his spectrum, and discovers that the far-off and the near by, in substance, are one and the same. To comprehend heaven, he dives into earth. As geologist, he investigates the strata of the planet on which he lives, and learns from it how stars are made. He solves the riddle of the sky near home, and bases his deductions upon data close at hand. The majesty of Aldebaran and Sol are akin to that of the spinning ball on which he dwells, and the throne of God were as well set on Olympus as at the highest peak of a fiery star in mid-heaven. He is growing, and his God grows with him. There has come upon him the consciousness that the *Little* and the *Great* are equally mysterious and out of reach. He seizes his microscope and nervously hunts for the small, smaller, smallest, till the lens fails, and his eye is exhausted. In his terror of the minute, the immense vanishes, Life, more and more tiny, beyond him, exquisite! awful! The

majesty of the invisible frightens him; his intellect can no more grasp this never-ending power of divisibility, this decreasing ratio in amount, accompanied by activity as proportionate to itself as is the animus to the body of man, than it can comprehend the awful size and distance, one from another, of the suns above. This astronomer, geologist, microscopist, has long since abandoned his wood and stone image. His great white throne upon which sat an anthropomorphic God, went also and something more subtle and abstract compels obeisance. As a man of science, he harnessed the lightning, and now that he finds that the ponderosity of the stars can be calculated, and their substance discovered, he seeks a more mysterious and subtler Object to revere. A something which shall *compel* him by its very *mystery* to bow the head.

The Sphinx assumes a new mask each day to the explorer along the path of Truth; yet the Sphinx, for it is not a still creature, ever moves, and keeps ahead of man. By fast running he gains upon it and tears off

its disguise, but another appears more inscrutible than the first, and the Sphinx, unfathomed, marches on.

"Canst thou by searching find out God?"

Man leaves the outer and explores the inner; from physics to metaphysics, is but a step. He studies the Ego and the Alter Ego, the Subject and Object; he investigates the emotions, the intellect, the will; he reaches for the meeting place of physiology and phychology, matter and mind; he debates the power of choice, the influence of environment, the truth of heredity; then back again to biology to mentally dissect the germ-cell and the nuclei, chemically analyzing the protoplasm, and frantically experimenting on the ameba, but, *new-faced,* the Sphinx moves on. Then turning upon himself, a true iconoclast, he tears out his own heart; with the dissecting instrument of intellect he probes it, and in the very act, its love and hate escape him. He attacks his own brain, to find the meaning of it also, and the subtle something recorded there, but thought vanishes with the onslaught.

"Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook?"

The depths of man are fathomless. His Entity floats on its sea of being like a boat on the ocean, asking "Whence, whither?" but discerning no shore. Then striving to analyze Ego with Ego, desperate, overmastered, balked, he finds the IMPOSSIBLE facing him full-orbed.

* * * * * *

Nature manifests in innumerable forms. Where is the Ultimate upon which these phenomena rest? This very multiplicity, greeting man at every turn, necessitates Unity at the base. Before this Unknowable Unity, he pauses, absorbed and hushed. Effects have causes. He studies *principles;* he finds in them *stability* and *universality*. The rule of a combination is changeless. Gravitation is unerring. Laws are combatted by laws only. But what these laws, why? His lips are sealed, he finds no answer. Then slowly, surely, there dawns upon him the certainty that there must be a *Principle* of the principles, a *Law* of the

laws. At last he stands stripped of delusion before the *Ultimate,* the Incomprehensible, the ever-present *Unity*. The changeless Mate of Change, for which he finds NO NAME. He coils, like a serpent, upon himself, and unites the extremes of his own being, into the spiral symbol of the East, to discover the fixed Principle of principles—a devouring mouth, drawing the lashing tail of Variety into its depths. He uncoils and extends his glittering body, stiff and stark in the sun, to find the Law of laws dictating the length of the stretch. Licensed to create in variety, yet ever restricted by the Principle of Unity, discerning this incomparable pair, finding himself undiscoverable as *IT,* and discoverable in many, awed by the opposition of the two poles of his unfathomable being, shocked at his puerile attempts in the days of his youth to find out God, he holds his breath and utters no sound, lest he desecrate the Everlasting, and profane the Unknown.

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